

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE PROPHET

MALACHI.

THE last prophet of the Old Testament, like the Forerunner of our Lord, whom he foreannounced under his own name, "the messenger of the Lord," willed to be but "the voice of one crying in the wilderness;" as his great successor, who took up his message, when asked, *Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?* said, *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.* He mentions neither his parentage, nor birthplace, nor date; nor did he add the name of his office^a, and has left it to be guessed, whether the name under which he is known, was the name which he bore among men; so wholly did he will to be hidden. No one before him is recorded to have borne his name. It may be that he framed it for himself, and willed to be known only as what it designated, "the messenger of the Lord." This was a favorite title with him, since, in this brief prophecy, he uses it, as describing the priest's office, and that of the forerunner^d; whereas, before him, except once by Haggai and once by Isaiah^e, it had been used only of the blessed Angels.

There is, however, no ground to think that it was not his name. Even the Seventy, who paraphrase it, "His messenger," prefix to the book the name Malachi; and the title,

מַלְאָכִי, the extremest abridgement of the fuller form, שְׁעָנִיָּה, אֲרִי, as Bezaleel's father (and two others) for אֲרִיָּה, 'Uriah' or אֲרִיָּהּ, Urijah the prophet Jer. xxvi. 20. sq. The same person אֲרִי 2 Kgs xviii. 2 is אֲרִיָּהּ in 2 Chr. xix. 1; וְכָרִי (the name of 11 persons) is doubtless abridged from אֲרִיָּהּ וְכָרִיָּהּ.

^a S. John i. 23.

"my messenger," would not have described that he was "the messenger of God," since the name of God had not preceded. "If names are to be interpreted," S. Jerome says, "and history is to be framed from them, not a spiritual meaning to be derived, then Hosea who is called Saviour, and Joel whose name means, 'Lord God,' and the other prophets will not be men, but rather angels or the Lord and Saviour, according to the meaning of their name." No special stress was laid upon the name, even by the Origenists, who supposed Haggai, Malachi and S. John Baptist to have been angels^g. Origen himself supposed S. John Baptist to have been an angel in human form^h, and Melchisedekⁱ, as well as Malachi. More widely, that "they became the words in the prophets."

At the time of our Lord, some accounted him to have been Ezra, perhaps for his zeal for the law. His date must, however, have been later, since there is no mention of the building of the temple, whose service was in its regular order. In the New Testament, like others of the twelve, he is cited without his name^j, or the substance of his prophecy, is spoken of or alluded to, without any reference to any human author^k; so entirely was his wish to remain hidden fulfilled.

^a Habakkuk and Haggai add the title of their office, "the prophet." Hab. i. 1. Hagg. i. 1.

^b Mal. ii. 7, iii. 1. ^c Hagg. i. 13, Is. xlii. 19.

^d Pref. ad Mal. T. i. p. 337 Vall.

^e Id. on Hagg. i. 13 p. 731 Vall.

^f Orig. Comm. in S. Joan. T. ii. n. 25. Opp. iv. 85

de la Rue. ^g S. Jer. Ep. 73 ad Evag. n. 2.

^h In Matt. Tom. ii. n. 31. Opp. iii. 649.

ⁱ "It is written." S. Matt. xi. 10. S. Luke vii. 27,

or, with Isaiah, "in the prophets." S. Mark i. 2.

^j S. Luke i. 17, 76. S. Matt. xvii. 10. S. John i. 21.

Yet he probably bore a great part in the reformation, in which Nehemiah coöperated outwardly, and to effect which, after he had, on the expiring of his 12 years of office^m, returned to Persia, he obtained leave to visit his own land againⁿ, apparently for a short time. For he mentions his obtaining that leave, in connection with abuses at Jerusalem, which had taken place in his absence, and which he began reforming, forthwith on his arrival. But three chief abuses, the neglect of God's service, the defilement of the priesthood and of their covenant, and the cruelty to their own Jewish wives, divorcing them to make way for idolatresses, are subjects of Malachi's reproofs. Nehemiah found these practices apparently rampant. It is not then probable that they had been, before, the subjects of Malachi's denunciation, nor were his own energetic measures probably fruitless, so that there should be occasion for these denunciations afterward. It remains, then, as the most probable, that Malachi, as the prophet, coöperated with Nehemiah, as the civil authority, as Haggai and Zechariah had with Zerubbabel. "So Isaiah coöperated with Hezekiah; Jeremiah with Josiah. Of a mere external reformation there is no instance" in Jewish history.

It does not appear, whether Nehemiah, on his return, was invested by the king of Persia with extraordinary authority for these reforms, or whether he was appointed as their governor. The brief account affords no scope for the mention of it. It is not then any objection to the contemporaneousness of Malachi and Nehemiah, that, whereas Nehemiah, while governor, required not the bread of the governor, i. e. the allowance granted him by the Persian government, as an impost upon the people, Malachi upbraids the people that they would not offer to their governor the poor things which they offered to Almighty God, or that the governor would not accept it, in that it would be an insult rather than an act of respect. For 1) the question in Malachi is of a free-offering, not of an impost; 2) Nehemiah says that he did not require it, not that he would not accept it; 3) there is no evidence that he was now governor, nor 4) any reason why he should not accept in their improved condition, what he did not require, ^pbecause the bondage was heavy upon this people. Presents were, as they are still, a common act of courtesy in the East.

Like S. John Baptist, though afar off, he prepared the way of the Lord by the preaching of repentance. More than other prophets, he unveils priests and people to themselves, interprets their thoughts to them, and puts

those thoughts in abrupt naked language, picturing them as demurring to every charge which he brought against them. They were not, doubtless, conscious hypocrites. For conscious hypocrisy is the sin of individuals, aping the graces which others possess and which they have not, yet wish to be held in estimation for having. Here, it is the mass which is corrupt. The true Israel are the exception; ^qthose who feared the Lord, the jewels of Almighty God. It is the hypocrisy of self-deceit, contented with poor, limited, outward service, and pluming itself upon it. Malachi unfolds to them the meaning of their acts. His thesis is themselves, whom he unfolds to them. He interprets himself, putting into their mouths words, betokening a simple unconsciousness either of God's goodness or their own evil. ^rYet ye say, Wherein hast Thou loved us? This was their inward thought, as it is the thought of all, ungrateful to God. But his characteristic is, that he puts these thoughts into abrupt, bold bad words, which might startle them for their hideousness, as if he would say, "This is what your acts mean." He exhibits the worm and the decay, which lay under the whitened exterior. ^sYe say, Wherein have we despised Thy Name? Perhaps, they were already learning, not to pronounce the proper Name of God, while they caused it to be despised. Or they pronounced it with reverent pause, while they shewed that they held cheap God and His service. ^tYe say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. ^uYe say, the table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, his meat, is contemptible. Their acts said it. What a reading of thoughts! ^vYe said also, Behold, what a weariness! It is the language of the heart in all indevolution. ^wYe say, Wherefore? as if innocently unconscious of the ground of God's judgment. ^xWherein have we robbed Thee? The language of those who count the earth as their own. ^yYe say, Wherein have we wearied Him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and in them doth He delight, or, Where is the God of judgment? The heart's speech in all envy at the prosperity of the wicked!

Yet the object of all this unfolding them to themselves, is their repentance. We have already the self-righteousness of the Pharisees, and the Sadducees' denial of God's Providence. And we have already the voice of S. John Baptist, of the wrath to come. They professed to ^zdelight in the coming of the messenger of the covenant; yet their deeds were such as would be burned up with the fire of His Coming, not, rewarded.

Pharisees and Sadducees are but two offshoots of the same ungodliness; Pharisees,

^m Neh. v. 14. ⁿ Ib. xiii. 6. ^o Hongst. Christ. iii. 583.
^p Neh. v. 18. ^q Mal. iii. 16. ^r L. 2. ^s L. 6.

^t Ib. 7. ^u Ib. and 12. ^v Ib. 13. ^w Ib. 14.
^x Ill. 8. ^y Ill. 7. ^z Ill. 1. iv. 1.

while they hoped by outward acts to be in favor with God, they become, at least, secret Sadducees, when the hope fails. First, they justify themselves. God had said to them,

^a *Ye are departed out of the way: I have made you base, as ye have not kept My ways.* They say ^b, *It is vain to serve God; and what profit, that we have kept His ordinance?* (affirming that they had done, what God called them to repentance for not doing). God said ^c, *Ye have covered the altar of the Lord with tears, the tears of their wronged wives; they insist on their own austerities, we have walked mournfully before the Lord our God.* Then comes the Sadducee portion. God had called them to obedience and said, ^d *Prove Me now here-with: they say, e the workers of wickedness have proved God, and are saved.* God promised, ^f *All nations shall call you blessed; they answer, g and now we call the proud blessed.* What have we spoken against Thee? is the last self-justifying question, which Malachi records of them; and this, while reproaching God for the uselessness of serving Him, and choosing the lot of those who rejected Him.

Thereon Malachi abandons this class to their own blindness. There was hope amid any sin, however it rebelled against God. This was a final denial of God's Providence and rejection of Himself. So Malachi closes with the same prophecy, with which S. John Baptist prepared our Lord's coming, *His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner, but the chaff He shall burn with fire unquenchable.* The unspeakable tenderness of God toward those who fear His name, and the severity to those who finally rebel, are perhaps nowhere more vividly declared, than in these closing words of the Old Testament. Yet the love of God, as ever, predominates; and the last prophet closes with the word "Remember," and with one more effort to avert the curse which they were bringing upon themselves. Yet no prophet declares more expressly the rejection of the people, to whom he came to minister, the calling of the Gentiles, the universal worship, in all the earth, of Him Who was hitherto worshiped by the Jews only; and that, not at Jerusalem, but each offering, in his own place, the sacrifice which hitherto (as they had recently experienced, in their captivity at Babylon) could be offered up in Jerusalem only. To him alone it was reserved to prophesy of the unbloody Sacrifice, which should be offered unto God in every place throughout

the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. It has been said, "Malachi is like a late evening, which closes a long day, but he is at the same time the morning twilight which bears in its bosom a glorious day."

"When Prophecy was to be withdrawn from the ancient Church of God, its last light was mingled with the rising beams of the Sun of Righteousness. In one view it combined a retrospect of the Law with the clearest specific signs of the Gospel advent. ¹ Remember ye the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the statutes and the judgments. Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Prophecy had been the oracle of Judaism and of Christianity, to uphold the authority of the one, and reveal the promise of the other. And now its latest admonitions were like those of a faithful departing minister, embracing and summing up his duties. Resigning its charge to the personal Precursor of Christ, it expired with the Gospel upon its lips."

A school, which regards the "prophets" chiefly as "poets," says that "the language is prosaic, and manifests the decaying spirit of prophecy." The office of the prophets was, to convey in forceful words, which God gave them, His message to His people. The poetic form was but an accident. God, Who knows the hearts of His creatures whom He has made, knows better than we, why He chose such an instrument. Zechariah, full of imagination, He chose some years before. But He preserved in history the account of the words which Zechariah spoke, not the words wherewith he urged the rebuilding of the temple, in his own book. Had Malachi spoken in imaginative language, like that of Ezekiel, to whom God says, *"thou art unto them like a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument, and they hear thy words and they do them not,"* it may be that they would have acted then, as they did in the time of Ezekiel. It may be, that times like those of Malachi, apathetic, self-justifying, murmuring, self-complacent, needed a sterner, abrupt, more startling voice to awaken them. *Wisdom was justified of her children.* God wrought by him a reformation for the time being: He gave through him a warning to the generation, when our Lord should come, that He should come, as their Judge as well as their Saviour, and, how they should stand in the day of His

^a ii. 8, 9.

^b ii. 13.

^c ii. 10. וְכִתְּבוּנִי

^d iii. 14.

^e iii. 15. וְכִתְּבוּנִי

^f וְאֶשְׂרֵי אֲתָכֶם ii. 12.

^g אֲנִיכֶם כְּאֶשְׂרֵם ii. 15. These last contrasts are Hengstenberg's Christ. iii. 597. ed. 2.

¹ S. Luke iii. 17.

² Nägelsbach in Herzog Real-Encycl.

³ Davison on prophecy pp. 456, 457. "Malachi, the last of the prophets, as in order, so in time; and even for that reason, by me chosen to fix my thoughts on, before others, because nearest, therefore, in conjunction with the Gospel: to which it leads us by the hand, and delivers us over; for that begins, where he ends." Poole, Dedication.

⁴ iv. 4.

⁵ Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

Coming. He gave it as a book to His whole Church, whereby to distinguish seeming from real service. Parting words are always solemn, as closing the past, and opening out a future of expectation before us. The position of Malachi, as the last of the prophets, bids us the more solemnly prepare for that

dread Day, our Lord's Second Coming, which he foretold, in one with the First, warning us that we deceive not ourselves, in unconsciousness of our own evil and remembrance of our seeming good, until He profess unto us, ^a *I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.*

=S. Matt. vii. 23.

MALACHI.

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CHAPTER I.

1 *Malachi complaineth of Israel's unkindness, 6 Of their irreligiousness, 12 and profaneness.*

THE burden of the word
of the LORD to Israel

† by Malachi.

2 *I have loved you,

† Heb. by the
hand of Mala-
chi.

* Deut. 7. 8.
& 10. 15.

saith the LORD. Yet ye
say, Wherein hast thou

loved us? Was not Esau
Jacob's brother? saith the
LORD: yet *I loved Rom. 9. 13.
Jacob.

3 And I hated Esau, *Jer. 49. 18.
and *laid his mountains Ezek. 35. 3, 4,
7, 8, 14, 15.
Obad. 10, &c.

CHAP. I. 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel.* "The word of the Lord is heavy, because it is called a burden, yet it hath something of consolation, because it is not 'against,' but to Israel. For it is one thing when we write to this or that person; another, when we write 'against' this or that person; the one being the part of friendship, the other, the open admission of enmity."

By the hand of Malachi; through him, as the instrument of God, deposited with him; as S. Paul speaks of *the dispensation of the Gospel*, *the word of reconciliation*, *the Gospel of the uncircumcision*, being committed to him.

2. *I have loved you, saith the Lord.* What a volume of God's relations to us in two simple words, *I have loved you*! So would not God speak, unless He still loved. "I have loved and do love you," is the force of the words. When? and since when? In all eternity God loved; in all our past, God loved. Tokens of His love, past or present, in good or seeming ill, are but an effluence of that everlasting love. He, the Unchangeable, ever loved, as the Apostle of love says; *we love Him, because He first loved us.* The deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, the making them His *peculiar people*, the adoption, the covenant, the giving of the law, the service of God and His promises, all the several mercies involved in these, the feeding with manna, the deliverance from their enemies whenever they returned to Him, their recent restoration, the gift of the prophets, were so many single pulses of God's everlasting love, uniform in itself, manifold in its manifestations. But it is more than a declaration of His everlasting love. "I have loved you;" God would say; with "a special love, a more than ordinary love, with greater tokens of

love, than to others." So God brings to the penitent soul the thought of its ingratitude: *I have loved you: I, you. And ye have said, Wherein hast Thou loved us?* It is a characteristic of Malachi to exhibit in all its nakedness man's ingratitude. This is the one voice of all men's murmurings, ignoring all God's past and present mercies, in view of the one thing which He withholds, though they dare not put it into words: *Wherein hast Thou loved us?* *Within a while they forgot His works, and the wonders that He had shewed them:* *they made haste, they forgot His works.*

Was not Esau Jacob's brother! saith the Lord: and I loved Jacob, and Esau have I hated. "While they were yet in their mother's womb, before any good or evil deserts of either, God said to their mother, *The elder shall serve the younger.* The hatred was not a proper and formed hatred, (for God could not hate Esau before he sinned) but only a lesser love," which, in comparison to the great love for Jacob, seemed as if it were not love. "So he says, *The Lord saw that Leah was hated;* where Jacob's neglect of Leah, and lesser love than for Rachel, is called 'hated;' yet Jacob did not literally hate Leah, whom he loved and cared for as his wife." This greater love was shewn in preferring the Jews to the Edomites, giving to the Jews His law, Church, temple, prophets, and subjecting Edom to them; and especially in the recent deliverance, "He does not speak directly of predestination, but of prelection, to temporal goods." God gave both nations alike over to the Chaldees for the punishment of their sins; but the Jews He brought back, Edom He left unrestored.

3. *And I made his mountains a waste, and his heritage for the jackals* of the wilderness.

which he, after Pococke, compares, is a nomen actionis, "a remaining, staying, dwelling, abiding (in a country, town, place), not 'the dwelling' itself. 2) he supposes תננות to be = תנאות (with dag. forte euphon.) as כקשאה for כקלה. (see Rod. in Ges. Thes.) But this would be to derive it from תנא, with the characteristics of תנן and none of הנא. 3) "dwellings of the

1 S. Jer. 21 Cor. ix. 17, Tit. i. 3. 2 Cor. v. 10.
Gal. ii. 7. 1 Tim. 18. 3 אהבת אהבה
1 S. John iv. 19. 4 Rom. ix. 4. 5 Poc.
Pa. lxxviii. 11. 6 Ib. cvi. 13. 7 Lap.
8 Gen. xxv. 23. 9 Ib. xxix. 31.
10 תננות, in this fem. form, is but a variation from the form elsewhere, תננים, as we have אלה and אלהות.
Ewald, Lehrb. n. 147b. p. 458. ed. 8. Ges.'s rendering "dwellings" (after the LXX. δῶματα ἀφῆσθαι, and Syr.) fails in many ways. The Arab תנאות

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and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they

shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

5 And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, 'The LORD will be magnified || † from the border of Israel.

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^a Ps. 35. 27.
† Or, upon.
Heb. from upon.

Malachi attests the first stage of fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, ¹ *Edom shall be a desolate wilderness*. In temporal things, Esau's blessing was identical with Jacob's; the *fatness of the earth* and of the *dew of heaven* from above; and the rich soil on the terraces of its mountain-sides, though yielding nothing now except a wild beautiful vegetation, and its deep glens, attest what they once must have been, when artificially watered and cultivated. The first desolation must have been through Nebuchadnezzar ² in his expedition against Egypt, when he subdued Moab and Ammon; and Edom lay in his way, as Jeremiah had foretold ³.

4. Whereas Edom saith ⁴, *We are impoverished* ⁵, or, more probably, *we were crushed*. Either gives an adequate sense. Human self-confidence will admit anything, as to the past; nay, will even exaggerate past evil to itself, "Crush us how they may, we will arise and repair our losses." So Ephraim said of old, ⁶ *"in the pride and stoutness of heart, The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with heum-stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars*. It is the one language of what calls itself, "indomitable;" in other words, "untameable," conquerors or every other gambler; "we will repair our losses." All is again staked and lost.

They shall call them the border of wickedness. Formerly it had its own proper name, *the border of Edom*, as other countries, ⁷ *all the border of Egypt*, ⁸ *the border of Moab*, ⁹ *the whole border of Israel*, ¹⁰ *the border of Israel*, ¹¹ *the whole*

border of the Amorite. Henceforth it should be known no more by its own name; but as *the border of wickedness*, where wickedness formerly dwelt, and hence the judgment of God and desolation from Him came upon it, "an accursed land." Somewhat in like way Jeremiah says of Jerusalem, ¹² *Many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say, every man to his neighbor, Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto this great city? Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped other gods and served them*. Only Israel would retain its name, as it has; Edom should be blotted out wholly and for ever.

5. *And your eyes shall see*. Malicious pleasure in looking on at the misery of Judæa and Jerusalem, had been a special sin of Edom: now God would shew Judah the fruit of its reversal, and His goodness toward themselves. ¹³ *Ye have assurance of His love toward you and providence over you, when ye see that ye are returned to your own land, and can inhabit it, but they cannot do this: but they build and I throw down, and ye therefore praise and magnify My name for this, and ye shall say, The Lord shall be magnified on the border of Israel*, i. e. His greatness shall be always manifest upon you; "high above and exalted over the border of Israel" ¹⁴, which shall retain its name, while Edom shall have ceased to be. Wickedness gives its name to Edom's border, as in Zechariah's vision it was removed and settled in Babylon ¹⁵.

wilderness," is the contradictory of what is meant, complete desolation. ¹ Joel iii. 19. vol. i. pp. 214, 215.

² Jos. Ant. x. 11. See vol. i. on Obad. 16. p. 362.

³ Jer. xxv. 9, 21.

⁴ תַּרְשִׁישׁ, Edom, for Idumæa, and so fem.

⁵ So Jon. and Syr. here κατέσπαρται, LXX: destructum sumus, Vulg. E. Tanchum gives both, here and on Jer. v. 17, and Sal. b. Mei. here out of Kim. on Jer. v. 17. Poc. On Jerem. Tanchum says the meaning "cut off" suits best the mention of the sword. Perhaps תַּרְשִׁישׁ may be — תַּרְשִׁישׁ, "Tarshish," may be so called, as a boast, "she crushes." Syr., in Jerem. also has "impoverished;" Jon. "destroy;" S. Jer. "conteret." The αλοῖσται of the LXX. probably implies a misreading, שָׁדַשׁ.

⁶ Is. lx. 9, 10. ⁷ Ex. x. 14, 19. ⁸ De. ii. 18.

⁹ 1 Sam. xi. 3, 7, xxvii. 1, 1 Chr. xxi. 12.

¹⁰ 2 Chr. xi. 13.

¹¹ Jud. xi. 22.

¹² Jer. xxii. 8, 9. Comp. Deut. xxix. 23-28.

¹³ Tanchum in Poc. here. Tanchum gives, as constructions of others, "the Lord, Who protecteth the border of Israel," or "ye from the border of Israel," or, "it had been fitting that ye should do this and abide in it; but ye have done the contrary," as he explains afterward.

¹⁴ מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ, as in Eccl. v. 7, מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ, "One high from above the high;" Ezek. i. 25. "a voice from the firmament (מִן הַמֶּלֶךְ) from above their heads," Gen. i. 7, "the waters above the firmament."

¹⁵ Zech. v. 8, 11.

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6 ¶ A son 'honoreth his father, and a servant his master: 'if then I be a father, where is mine honor?

* Ex. 20. 12.
† Luke 6. 46.

6. *A son honoreth his father, and a slave his lord.* Having spoken of the love of God, he turns to the thanklessness of man. God appeals to the first feelings of the human heart, the relation of parent and child, or, failing this, to the natural self-interest of those dependent on their fellow-men. *A son* by the instinct of nature, by the unwritten law written in the heart, *honoreth his father*. If he fail to do so, he is counted to have broken the law of nature, to be an unnatural son. If he is, what by nature he ought to be, he does really honor him. He does not even speak of love, as to which they might deceive themselves. He speaks of *honor*, outward reverence only; which whoso sheweth not, would openly condemn himself as an unnatural son, a bad slave. "Of course," the Jews would say, "children honor parents, and slaves their masters, but what is that to us?" God turns to them their own mental admission.

If I am a Father. "1 Although, before ye were born, I began to love you in Jacob as sons, yet chose by what title ye will name Me: I am either your Father or your Lord. If a Father, render me the honor due to a father, and offer the piety worthy of a parent. If a Lord, why despise ye Me? why fear ye not your Lord?" God was their Father by creation, as He is Father of all, as Creator of all. He had come to be their Father in a nearer way, by temporal redemption and adoption as His peculiar people, creating them to be a nation to His glory. This they were taught to confess in their psalmody, *2 He hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.* This title God had given them in sight of the Egyptians, *3 Israel is My son, My firstborn:* of this Hosea reminded them; *4 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt;* and Jeremiah reassured them, *5 I am a Father to Israel and Ephraim is My first-born:* this, Isaiah had pleaded to God; *6 Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, Thy name is from everlasting.* *7 And now, O Lord, Thou art our Father; we the clay, and Thou our potter; and we all, the work of Thy hands.* God had impressed this His relation of Father, in Moses' prophetic warn-

and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my

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ing; *8 Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not He thy Father that hath bought thee? hath He not made thee and established thee?* "9 God is the Father of the faithful; 1) by creation; 2) by preservation and governance; 3) by alimony; 4) by fatherly care and providence; 5) by faith and grace, whereby He justifies and adopts us as sons and heirs of His kingdom."

If I am a Father. He does not throw doubt, that He is our Father; but, by disobedience, we in deeds deny it. Our life denies what we in words profess. *Where is My honor?* "10 Why obey ye not My precepts, nor honor Me with acts of adoration; praying, praising, giving thanks, sacrificing, and reverently fulfilling every work of God? For *11 cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.*"

And if I am your Lord, "as I certainly am, and specially by singular providence." "12 He is our Lord by the same titles, that He is our Father, and by others, as that He has redeemed us, and purchased us to Himself by the Blood of His Son; that He is the Supreme Majesty, Whom all creation is bound to serve; that, setting before us the reward of eternal glory, He has hired us as servants and laborers into His vineyard." (God Alone is Lord through universal sovereignty, undervied authority, and original source of laws, precepts, rights; and all other lords are but as ministers and instruments, compared to Him, the Lord and original Doer of all. Hence He says, *13 I am the Lord; that is My Name, and My glory will I not give to another.*

Where is My fear? which ought to be shewn Me. "14 If thou art a servant, render to the Lord the service of fear; if a son, shew to thy Father the feeling of piety. But thou renderest not thanks, neither lovest nor fearest God. Thou art then either a contumacious servant or a proud son." "15 Fear includes reverence, adoration, sacrifice, the whole worship of God." "16 Whoso feareth is not over-curious, but adores; is not inquisitive, but praises, and glorifies."

"17 Fear is twofold; servile, whereby punishment, not fault, is dreaded; filial, by which fault is feared. In like way service is twofold. A servant with a service of fear, purely servile, does not deserve to be called

1 S. Jer.

2 Ex. iv. 22.

3 Jer. xxxi. 9.

4 Deut. xxxii. 6.

5 Ps. c. 3

6 Hos. xi. 1. See vol. i. p. 109.

7 Is. lxiii. 16.

8 Ib. lxiv. 8.

9 Lap.

10 Dion. 11 Jer. xlviii. 10. 12 Lap. 13 Is. xlii. 8.

14 Lap. as from S. Ambr.

15 S. Chyrs. de Incompr. Del. Hom. ii. T. 1. p. 459.

Ben.

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ch. 2, 14, 17.
& 3. 7, 8, 13.

name. * And ye say,
Wherein have we despised
thy name?

7 || Ye offer^a polluted
bread upon mine altar;
and ye say, Wherein have

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Or, Bring
unto, &c.
^a Deut. 15. 21.

a son of God, nor is in a state of salvation, not having love. Whence Christ, distinguishing such a servant from a son of God by adoption, saith, ¹ *The servant abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth ever:* and again, ² *The servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth.* But a servant, whose service is of pure and filial love, is also a son, of whom the Saviour saith, ³ *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* But since a distinction is made here between the son and the servant, he seems to be speaking of servile fear, which, although it doth not good well and meritoriously, i. e. with a right intention and from love, yet withdraws from ill, and is the beginning of wisdom, because it disposeth to grace. Whence it is written, ⁴ *The fear of the Lord driveth away sins,* and again Scripture saith, ⁵ *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.*

"God requireth to be feared as a Lord, honored as a Father, loved as a Husband. Which is chiefest of these? Love. Without this, fear has torment, honor has no grace. Fear, when not enfreed by love, is servile. Honor, which cometh not from love, is not honor, but adulation. Honor and glory belong to God Alone; but neither of them will God accept, unless seasoned with the honey of love."

Saith the Lord unto you, O priests, who despise My Name, lit. *despisers of My Name*, habitually beyond others. The contempt of God came specially from those bound most to honor him. Priests, as consecrated to God, belonged especially to God. ⁷ Malachi begins his prophecy and correction by the correction of the priests; because the reformation of the state and of the laity hangs upon the reformation of the clergy and the priest; for ⁸ *as is the priest, such also is the people.* He turns, with a suddenness which must have been startling to them, to them as the centre of the offending.

And ye say, *Wherein have we despised Thy Name?* Before, it was ignorance of God's

love: now it is ignorance of self and of sin. They affect to themselves innocence and are unconscious of any sin. They said to themselves doubtless, (as many do now) "we cannot help it; we do the best we can, under the circumstances." Without some knowledge of God's love, there can be no sense of sin; without some sense of sin, no knowledge of His love. They take the defensive, they are simply surprised, like Cain, ⁹ *Am I my brother's keeper?* or many of the lost in the Day of judgment, ¹⁰ *Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?* and yet were all the while workers of iniquity, to whom He will say, *I never knew you:* and, ¹¹ *Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?* And yet they shall go away into everlasting punishment.

7. *Offering polluted bread upon Mine altar.* This, continuing on the words, *despisers of My Name*¹², is the answer to their question, *Wherein have we despised Thy Name?* Bread might stand, in itself, either for the shewbread, or for the "minchah," meal-offering, which was the necessary accompaniment of sacrifices and sometimes the whole. But here the *polluted bread* cannot be the shewbread, since this was not put upon the altar, but upon its own table; and although the altar is, as here, also called "a table"¹³ in regard to the sacrifice hereon consumed, "the table" of the shewbread is nowhere called "altar." The prophet then means by *bread*, either the meal-offering, as representing the sacrifice, or the offerings by fire altogether, as in Ezekiel, ¹⁴ *When ye offer My bread, the fat and the blood;* and in Leviticus, ¹⁵ *the offerings of the Lord, made by fire, the bread of their God, do they offer;* and of the *peace-offering*¹⁶, *the priest shall burn it upon the altar; the bread of the offering made by fire unto the Lord:* and specifically, of animals with blemish, as these, it is forbidden, ¹⁷ *Neither from a*

by the finite verb. ¹⁸ *וְהָיָה* is used with ¹⁹ *ל*, of offerings to God, Am. v. 25, Mal. ii. 12; with ²⁰ *לְ*, here only.

¹² In Ezek. xli. 22, the "altar" is called the table that is before the Lord, and in regard to the offering of the sacrifice, it is said, *they shall come near to my table*, Ezek. xli. 15, 16. ¹⁴ Ezek. xlii. 7.

¹⁵ Lev. xxi. 6; more briefly, *the bread of thy God, ib. 8, of his God, ib. 17 and (parallel with to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire), 21; to eat the bread of his God (in contrast with offering it) ib. 22, and in Nu. xxxiii. 2, "thy offering, thy bread for thy sacrifices made by fire, shall ye observe to offer to Me."*

¹⁶ Lev. iii. 11.

¹⁷ Ib. xxii. 25.

¹ S. John viii. 35.

² S. Matt. xxv. 21, 23. ³ Eccles. i. 21. ⁴ Pr. xvi. 6.

⁵ S. Bern. Serm. 83 in Cant. n. 4. Opp. i. 1660 Ben.

Lap. ⁶ Lap. ⁷ Hos. iv. 9. ⁸ Gen. iv. 9.

⁹ S. Matt. vii. 22, 23. ¹⁰ Ib. xxv. 44, 46.

¹¹ The collocation of *וְהָיָה* is probably subordinate to the verb, expressed in the question, *ye despise, offering;* as the participle often is to the expressed finite verb. Nu. xxvi. 27. Jud. viii. 4. Ps. vii. 3. lxxviii. 4. Job xiv. 20. xxiv. 5. Ezr. x. 1. Jer. xlii. 2 (instances out of those in Ewald Lebrh. 2 341. b. 3. p. 386. ed. 3.) This case is however more developed than the rest, as not being contemporaneous only, but in explanation of that expressed

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we polluted thee? In that
ye say, 'The table of the
LORD is contemptible.

8 And ^aif ye offer the
blind [†]for sacrifice, *is it*
not evil? and if ye offer

the lame and sick, *is it not*
evil? offer it now unto thy
governor; will he be
pleased with thee, or 'ac-
cept thy person? saith the
LORD of hosts.

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¹ Job 42. 8.

¹ Ezek. 41. 22.
ver. 12.
² Lev. 22. 22.
Deut. 15. 21.
ver. 14.
[†] Heb. *to sacrifice*.

*stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your
God of any of these, because their corruption is
in them, blemishes in them: they shall not be
accepted for you.* It was, as it were, a feast of
God with man, and what was withdrawn
from the use of man by fire, was, as it were,
consumed by God, to Whom it was offered.

It was polluted, in that it was contrary to
the law of God which forbade to sacrifice any
animal, lame or blind or with any ill blemish,
as being inconsistent with the typical per-
fection of the sacrifice. Even the Gentiles
were careful about the perfection of their
sacrifices.

^a Blind is the sacrifice of the soul, which
is not illumined by the light of Christ. Lame
is his sacrifice of prayer, who comes with
a double mind to entreat the Lord."

² He offereth one weak, whose heart is not
established in the grace of God, nor by the
anchor of hope fixed in Christ. These words
are also uttered against those who, being
rich, offer to the Creator the cheaper and
least things, and give small alms."

And ye say, *Wherewith have we polluted
Thee?* It is a bold expression. Yet a
word, to which we are but too ill-ac-
customed, which expresses what most have
done, "dishonor God," comes to the same.
Though less bold in expression, they are
yet like in meaning. ⁴ Will ye pollute Me
any more among My people? or, ⁵ that My
Name should not be polluted before the heathen.

⁶ My holy Name shall Israel no more defile;
⁷ I will not let them pollute My Name any more.

⁸ Much more in the new law, in which the
Sacrifice is Christ Himself our God, whence
the Apostle says expressly, ⁹ *Whoso eateth this
bread and drinketh this Cup of the Lord un-
worthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of
the Lord.* ¹¹ For when the Sacraments are
violated, Himself, Whose Sacraments they
are, is violated." God speaks of our acts
with an unveiled plainness, which we should
not dare to use. ¹² As we are said to *sanctify
God*, when we minister to Him in holiness
and righteousness, and so, as far as in us lies,

shew that He is holy; so we are said to *pol-
lute* Him, when we conduct ourselves irre-
verently and viciously before Him, especially
in His worship, and thereby, as far as in us
lies, shew that He is not holy and is to be
dishonored."

*In that ye say, the table of the Lord is contempt-
ible, lit. contemptible is it*¹⁰, and so any con-
temptible thing might be offered on it. They
said this probably, not in words, but in deeds.
Or, if in words, in plausible words. ¹¹ God
doth not require the ornamenting of the
altar, but the devotion of the offerers."
¹¹ What good is it, if we offer the best? Be
what we offer, what it may, it is all to be
consumed by fire." ¹² The pretext at once
of avarice and gluttony!" And so they
kept the best for themselves. They were
poor, on their return from the captivity.
Anyhow, the sacrifices were offered. What
could it matter to God? And so they dis-
pensed with God's law.

¹² So at this day we see some priests and
prelates, splendid in their tables and feasts,
sordid in the altar and temple; on the table
are costly napkins and wine; on the Altar
torn linen and wine-mace¹³ rather than
wine." ¹⁴ We pollute the bread, that is, the
Body of Christ, when we approach the Altar
unworthily, and, being defiled, drink that
pure Blood, and say, *The table of the Lord is
contemptible*; not that any one dares to say
this, but the deeds of sinners pour contempt
on the Table of God."

8. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it
not evil?* Others, *it is not evil*, as we should
say, "there is no harm in it." Both imply,
alike, an utter unconsciousness on the part
of the offerer, that it was evil: the one, in
irony, that this was always their answer,
"there is nothing amiss;" the other is an
indignant question, "is there indeed nought
amiss?" And this seems the most natural.

The sacrifice of the blind and lame was ex-
pressly forbidden in the law¹⁴, and the sick
in manifold varieties of animal disease.
Whatever hath a blemish ye shall not offer,

as in Gen. xxxiv. 21, "these men, peaceful are they,"
1b. xlii. 11; "all of us, sons of one man are we."
Ewald n. 297. b. pp. 761, 762.

¹¹ Remig.
¹² Lap. referring to Card. Bellarmine de gemitu
columbarum.

¹³ "villum" ("the refuse of kernels and skins").
potius quam vinum." ¹⁴ Deut. xv. 21.

¹ S. Jer.

² Dion.

³ The conj. ¹ occurs only here: the pass. ²
here and 12. Ezr. ii. 62, Neh. vii. 64, in one idiom.

⁴ Ezek. xlii. 19.

⁵ 1b. xx. 9, 14, 22.

⁶ 1b. xliii. 7.

⁷ 1b. xxxix. 7.

⁸ Lap.

⁹ 1 Cor. xi. 27.

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† Heb. *the face of God.*
= Hos. 13. 9.
† Heb. *from your hand.*

9 And now, I pray you, beseech † God that he will be gracious unto us: ² this hath been † by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

10 Who is there even

among you that would shut the doors for nought?

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² neither do ye kindle fire ¹ on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, ² neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

¹ Isai. 1. 11.
Jer. 6. 20.
Amos 5. 21.

¹ blind or with limb broken, or wounded or mangy or scabby or scurfy. Perfectness was an essential principle of sacrifice; whether, as in the daily sacrifice, or the sin or trespass-offering, typical of the all-perfect Sacrifice, or in the whole-burnt-offering, of the entire self-oblation. But these knew better than God, what was fit for Him and them. His law was to be modified by circumstances. He would not be so particular, (as men now say so often.)

Is it then fit to offer to God what under the very same circumstances man would not offer to man? Against these idle, ungrateful, covetous thoughts God saith,

Offer it now unto thy governor. He appeals to our own instinctive thought of propriety to our fellow creature, which may so often be a test to us. No one would think of acting to a fellow-creature, as they do to Almighty God. Who would make diligent preparation to receive any great one of the earth, and turn his back upon him, when come? Yet what else is the behavior of most Christians after Holy Communion? If thou wouldest not do this to a mortal man, who is but dust and ashes, how much less to God Almighty, the King of kings and Lord of lords! ² The words are a reproof to those most negligent persons, who go through their prayers to God without fear, attention, reverence or feeling; but if they have to speak to some great man, prelate or prince, approach him with great reverence, speak carefully and distinctly and are in awe of him. Do not thou prefer the creature to the Creator, man to God, the servant to the Lord, and that Lord, so exalted and so Infinite."

9. And now entreat, I pray you, God ², that He will be gracious unto you. This is not a call to repentance, for he assumes that God would not accept them. It is rather irony; "go now, seek the favor of God, as ye would not that of your governor." *From your hand, not from your fathers, not from aliens, hath this been: will He accept persons from you?* The unusual construction seems to imply a

difference of meaning; as if he would say, that it consisted not with the justice of God, that He should be an acceptor of persons, (which He declares that He is not) which yet He would be, were He to accept them, while acting thus.

10. Who is there even among you? This stinginess in God's service was not confined to those offices which cost something, as the sacrifices. Not even services absolutely costless, which required only a little trouble, as that of closing the folding-doors of the temple or the outer court, or bringing the fire to consume the sacrifices, would they do without some special hire. All was mercenary and hireling service. Others have rendered it as a wish, *who is there among you* / i. e. would that there were one among you, who would close the doors altogether; so shall ye not kindle fire on Mine altar for nought, i. e. fruitlessly! But apart from the difficulty of the construction, it is not God's way to quench the smouldering flax. He Who bids, *Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost*, accepts any imperfect service rather than none. He does not break off the last link, which binds man to Himself. Then, if or when God willed His service to cease, He would do it Himself, as He did by the destruction of the temple before the Captivity, or finally by the Romans. It would have been an ungodly act, (such as was only done by Ahaz, perhaps the most ungodly king of Israel ⁴), and one which especially called down His wrath ⁵, to close the doors, and therewith to break off all sacrifice. Manasseh carried the worship of false gods into the temple itself; Ahaz, as far as in him lay, abolished the service of God. A prophet of God could not express a wish, that pious Israelites (for it is presupposed that they would do this out of zeal for God's honor) should bring the service of God to an end.

He sums up with an entire rejection of them, present and future. *I have no pleasure in you*; it is a term of repudiation ⁶, sometimes of disgust ⁷, *neither will I accept an offer-*

¹ Lev. xxii. 22.

² Dion.

³ אֱלֹהִים seems to be used purposely in contrast with man, אֲדָמָה in Is. xxxi. 3, *The Egyptians are men and not God.*

⁴ 2 Chron. xxviii. 24.

⁵ Ib. xxix. 8.

⁶ אֵין חֶסֶד 1 Sam. xviii. 25. Eccl. v. 3. [4 Eng.]

⁷ אֵין חֶסֶד Jer. xxii. 23, xlviii. 38, Hos. viii. 3.

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Ps. 113. 3.
Isa. 59. 19.

11 For ²from the rising
of the sun even unto the
going down of the same
my name *shall be great*

ing at your hands. He says not simply, ¹your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto Me, but, *I will not accept it.* Such as they were, such they would be hereafter. God would not accept their sacrifices, but would replace them.

11. For. The form of words does not express whether this declaration relates to the present or the future. It is a vivid present, such as is often used to describe the future. But the things spoken of shew it to be future. The Jewish sacrifices had defects, partly incidental, partly inherent. Incidental were those, with which the Prophet had upbraided them; inherent, (apart from their mere typical character) that they never could be the religion of the world, since they were locally fixed at Jerusalem. Malachi tells them of a new sacrifice, which should be offered throughout the then heathen world, grounded on His new revelation of Himself to them. For great shall be My Name among the heathen. The prophet anticipates an objection ², which the Jews might make to him. ³What then will God do unto His great Name? Those by which He would replace them, would be more worthy of God in two ways, 1) in themselves, 2) in their universality. Then, whatsoever the heathen worshipped, even if some worshipped an unknown God, His Name was not known to them, nor great among them. Those who knew of Him, knew of Him, not as the Lord of heaven and earth, but as the God of the Jews only; their offerings were not pure, but manifoldly defiled. A Hebrew prophet could not be an apologist for heathen idolatry amidst its abominations, or set it on a level with the worship which God had, for the time, appointed; much less could he set it forth as the true acceptable service of God ⁴. Malachi himself speaks of it, as an aggrava-

⁵among the Gentiles; ⁶and
in every place ⁷incense
shall be offered unto my
name, and a pure offering :

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⁸Isa. 60. 3, 5.
⁹John 4. 21, 23.
¹⁰1 Tim. 2. 8.
¹¹Rev. 8. 3.

tion of cruelty in their divorcing of their wives, that they ⁸married the daughter of a strange god. The worship of those Jews, who remained, out of secular interests, in foreign countries, could not be represented as the "pure offering;" for they made no offerings: then as now, these being forbidden out of Jerusalem; nor would the worship of such Jews, as were scattered in the large empire of Persia, be contrasted with that at Jerusalem, as the pure worship; else why should the Jews have returned? It would have been an abolition of the law before its time. Malachi prophesies then, as had Micah, Isaiah, Zephaniah ⁹, of a new revelation of God, when, and in which, men should worship Him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.

Our Lord Himself explains and expands it in His words to the Samaritan woman; ¹⁰Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.—The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, and declared the rejection of the Jews, sealing their own sentence against themselves, ¹¹I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof; and before, ¹²Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, and the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.

Incense shall be offered unto My name, lit. I think, there shall be incense, oblation made unto My name [this is a mere question of construction ¹³], and a pure oblation.

¹ Jer. vi. 20. ² Poc. ³ Jos. vii. 9.
⁴ So in Rashi; Our rabbis say, that "they [the heathen] called Him [the Lord] God of gods; he too who hath an idol, knoweth, that He [the Lord] is God, that He is above all those things, and that in every place the Gentiles also, of their own accord, offer unto my name. But our rabbis have expounded, that they [those spoken of] are the disciples of the wise, who in every place are occupied in the rules of the Divine worship; so also all the prayers of Israel, which they make in every place, these are like a pure oblation (Minchah), and so Jonathan interprets, 'at whatever time ye shall do My will, I receive your prayers, and My great name is sanctified by you, and your prayer is like a pure oblation before Me.'" See Ibn Ezra, D. Kim., Tanchum, Aharb., in Poc.

⁵ Mal. ii. 11. ⁶ Zeph. ii. 11.
⁷ S. John iv. 21, 23, 24. ⁸ S. Matt. xxi. 41, 43.
⁹ Id. viii. 11, 12.

¹⁰ מִקְטָר מִנְחָה are, I think most probably, two independent impersonal passive participles, taken as future, "will be incensed, offered [wird geräuchert, dargebracht] Ewald (Lehrb. 295a) רִנְנוּלִי, "there is begun," טָרַד, "there is wasted," דָּבַר "there is spoken" (Ps. lxxxvii. 3), and this place. Tanchum praises Abuiwald for taking מִקְטָר as a noun — קטורה (Lib. Rad. col. C34). He adds, "The rest (עֲיִירָה) take them as adjectives with an unexpressed substantive." This, I think right: for, although מִקְטָר might be 'what is incensed,' and so a subst. מִנְחָה is used elsewhere of offering a sacrifice, not of offering incense, and so מִקְטָר could not be the subject to it.

This sacrifice, which should be offered, is designated by the special name of *meal-offering*¹. God would not accept it from the Jews; He would, from the Heathen. It was a special sacrifice, offered by itself as an unbloody sacrifice, or together with the bloody sacrifice. ² *It is most holy, as the sin-offering and as the trespass-offering.* In the daily sacrifice it was offered morning and evening, with the lamb. As this was typical of the precious blood-shedding of the *Lamb without spot* upon the Cross, so was the meal-offering which accompanied it, of the Holy Eucharist.

The early Christians saw the force of the prediction, that sacrifice was contrasted with sacrifice, the bloody sacrifices which were ended by the "One full perfect and sufficient Sacrifice Oblation and Satisfaction" made by our Lord "on the Altar of the Cross for the sins of the whole world," and those sacrifices which He commanded to be made on our Altars, as a memorial of Him. So S. Justin, who was converted probably A.D. 133, within 30 years from the death of S. John, says, "God has therefore beforehand declared, that all who through this name offer those sacrifices, which Jesus, Who is the Christ, commanded to be offered, that is to say, in the Eucharist of the Bread and of the Cup, which are offered in every part of the world by us Christians, are well-pleasing to Him. But those sacrifices, which are offered by you and through those priests of yours, He wholly rejects, saying, *And I will not accept your offerings at your hands. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, My Name is glorified among the Gentiles; but ye profane it.*"

He points out further the failure of the Jewish explanation as to their sacrifices, in that the Church was everywhere, not so the Jews. "You and your teachers deceive yourselves, when you interpret this passage of Scripture of those of your nation who were in the dispersion⁴, and say that it speaks of their prayers and sacrifices made in every place, as pure and well-pleasing, and know that you speak falsely, and endeavor in every way to impose upon yourselves; first, because your people are not found, even now, from the rising to the setting of the sun, but there are nations, in which none of your race have ever dwelt: whilst there is not one nation of men, whether Barbarians, or Greeks, or by whatsoever name distinguished, whether of those (nomads) who live in wagons, or of those who have no houses, or those pastoral people that dwell in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and

Creator of all things, through the name of the crucified Jesus. And you know that at the time when the prophet Malachi said this, the dispersion of you through the whole world, in which you now are, had not yet taken place; as is also shewn by Scripture."

S. Irenæus in the same century, "He took that which is part of the creation, viz. bread, and gave thanks, saying, *This is My Body.* And the Cup likewise, which is of the creation which appertains unto us, He professed to be His own Blood, and taught men the new oblation of the New Testament; which the Church receiving from the Apostles offers unto God in the world:—unto Him Who giveth us nourishment, the first-fruits of His own gifts, in the New Testament; of which in the twelve prophets Malachi gave beforehand this intimation [quoting Mal. i. 10, 11]; most evidently intimating hereby, that while the former people should cease to make offerings to God, in every place sacrifice should be offered unto Him, and that in pureness; His Name also is glorified among the Gentiles. Now what other name is there, which is glorified among the Gentiles, than that which belongs to our Lord, by Whom the Father is glorified, and man is glorified? And because man belongs to His Own Son, and is made by Him, He calls him His Own. And as if some King were himself to paint an image of his own son, he justly calls it his own image, on both accounts, first that it is his son's, next, that he himself made it: so also the Name of Jesus Christ, which is glorified in the Church throughout the whole world, the Father professes to be His own, both because it is His Son's, and because He Himself wrote and gave it for the salvation of men. Because therefore the Name of the Son properly belongs to the Father, and in God Almighty through Jesus Christ the Church makes her offering, well saith He on both accounts, *And in every place incense is offered unto My Name, and a pure sacrifice.* And incense, John in the Apocalypse declares to be the *prayers of the Saints*. Therefore the offering of the Church, which the Lord hath taught to be offered in the whole world, is accounted with God as a pure sacrifice, and accepted of Him."

Tertullian contrasts the "sacerdotal law through Moses, in Leviticus, prescribing to the people of Israel, that sacrifices should in no other place be offered to God than in the land of promise, which the Lord God was about to give to the people Israel and to their brethren, in order that on Israel's introduction thither, there should be these

themselves in the present, and so of the times of Malachi after the return of others from Babylon. ⁵ *iv.* 17. 5. pp. 356, 357. Oxf. Tr. See also his *Fragment xxxvi.* p. 554, 555. Oxf. Tr. ⁶ *c. Jud.* i. 5. p. 214 Edinb. Tr. Add c. Marcon. iii. 22.

¹ Lev. ii. 7 (14 Eng.) sqq.

² Ib. vi. 17. [10. Heb.]

³ Dial. c. Tryph. § 117 pp. 215, 216 Oxf. Tr. also § 28, pp. 104, 105. Ib.

⁴ The Jews then must have interpreted it of

celebrated sacrifices and holocausts, as well for sins as for souls, and nowhere else but in the holy land¹ and this subsequent prediction of "the Spirit through the prophets, that in every place and in every land there should be offered sacrifices to God. As He says through the angel Malachi, one of the twelve prophets, (citing the place)."

S. Hippolytus, a disciple of S. Irenæus, A. D. 220. martyr, in a commentary on Daniel, says that "when Anti-Christ cometh, the sacrifice and libation will be taken away, which is now in every place offered by the Gentiles to God." The terms "Sacrifice offered in every place" are terms of Malachi.

So S. Cyprian, in his Testimonies against the Jews, sums up the teaching of the passage under this head, "That the old sacrifice was to be made void, and a new sacrifice instituted."

In the "Apostolic Constitutions" the prophecy is quoted as "said by God of His oecumenical Church."

Eusebius says, "The truth bears witness to the prophetic word, whereby God, rejecting the Mosaic sacrifices, foretells that which shall be among us. For from the rising of the sun &c. We sacrifice then to the supreme God the sacrifice of praise; we sacrifice the Divine, reverend and holy oblation: we sacrifice, in a new way according to the New Testament, the pure sacrifice. The broken heart is also called a sacrifice to God—We sacrifice also the Memory of that great Sacrifice, performing it according to the mysteries which have been transmitted by Him."

S. Cyril of Jerusalem² speaks of it only as prophesying the rejection of the Jews and the adoption of the Gentiles.

In the liturgy of S. Mark³, it is naturally quoted, only, as fulfilled "in the reasonable and unbloody sacrifice, which all nations offer to Thee, O Lord, from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof" not in reference to the cessation of Jewish sacrifices.

S. Chrysostom dwells on its peculiar force, coming from so late a prophet⁴. "Hear Malachi, who came after the other prophets. For I adduce, for the time, no testimony either of Isaiah or Jeremiah or any other before the Captivity, lest thou shouldst say that the terrible things which he foretold were exhausted in the Captivity. But I adduce a prophet, after the return from

Babylon and the restoration of your city, prophesying clearly about you. For when they had returned, and recovered their city, and rebuilt the temple and performed the sacrifices, foretelling this present desolation then future, and the taking away of the sacrifice, Malachi thus speaks in the Person of God [ver. 10 fin.—12 beg.]. When, oh Jew, happened all this? When was incense offered to God in every place? when a pure sacrifice? Thou couldest not name any other time, than this, after the Coming of Christ. If the prophet foretelleth not this time and our sacrifice, but the Jewish, the prophecy will be against the law. For if, when Moses commandeth that sacrifice should be offered in no other place than the Lord God should choose, and shutteth up those sacrifices in one place, the prophet says that incense should be offered in every place and a pure sacrifice, he opposeth and contradiceth Moses. But there is no strife nor contention. For Moses speaketh of one sacrifice, and Malachi of another. Where doth this appear? [From the place, not Judæa only; from the mode, that it should be pure; from the offerers, not Israel, but the nations,] from East to West, shewing that whatever of earth the sun surveys, the preaching will embrace.—He calls the former sacrifice impure, not in its own nature but in the mind of the offerers; if one compares the sacrifice itself, there is such a boundless distance, that this [that offered by Christians] might in comparison be called 'pure.'"

Even the cold, but clear, Theodoret has, "Foretelling to the Jews the cessation of the legal priesthood, he announces the pure and unbloody sacrifice of the Gentiles. And first he says to the Jews, *I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will not accept a sacrifice at your hands.* Then he foreshews the piety of the Gentiles, *For from the rising of the sun &c.* (Mal. i. 11.) You then I will wholly reject; for I detest altogether what you do. Wherefore also I reject the sacrifice offered by you; but instead of you, I have the whole world to worship Me. For the dwellers in the whole earth, which the rising and setting sun illumines, will everywhere both offer to Me incense, and will sacrifice to Me the pure sacrifice, which I love. For they shall know My name and My will, and shall offer to Me reverence due. So the Lord said

although without allusion to the Eucharistic sacrifice, Ib. i. 6. p. 19; and in ii. 29. pp. 53, 56, of the rejection of the Jewish nation and their bodily worship according to the law of Moses, and the spiritual worship given to all nations through Christ."

¹ Cat. xviii. 25. ² Assem. Cod. Lit. vii. 19, 20. ³ Ad. Jud. v. 12. Opp. i. 647, 648. Montf. See also his Expos. in Ps. 112. n. 2. Opp. v. 238, 239, and Quod Christus sit Deus Opp. i. 682. "Sawest thou, how plainly he both cast out Judaism and exhibited Christianity effulgent and extended over the whole world?" ⁴ ad. loc.

¹ Lev. xvii. 1-6, Deut. xii. 5-14, 26, 27.

² Interpret. in Dan. n. xxii. p. 110, published from the Chisian codex of cent. x. in Daniel sec. LXX. Romæ 1772. The passage is quoted loosely by S. Jerome in Dan. c. 9. Opp. v. 689. Vall.

³ Testim. ad Quirin. i. 16. pp. 23 and 31. Oxf. Tr.

⁴ vii. 30 [on their age, especially of that of their substance, see Pusey, The Real Presence the doctrine of the early Church pp. 603-609.]

⁵ Dem. Ev. i. 10. fin. He also quotes the passage in proof of the abolition of the Jewish sacrifices,

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* for my name shall be great
among the heathen, saith
the LORD of hosts.

*Isai. 66. 19, 20.

12 ¶ But ye have profaned it, in that ye say,
"The table of the LORD
is polluted: and the fruit

*ver. 7.

thereof, even his meat is
contemptible.

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13 Ye said also, Behold,
what a weariness is it!

¶ and ye have snuffed at it, Or, whereas ye
might have blown it away.
it, saith the LORD of
hosts: and ye brought

to the Samaritan woman, *Woman, believe Me, that the hour cometh and now is, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father.*—The blessed Paul, being instructed in this, says, *I will that men pray everywhere &c.* and the Divine Malachi clearly taught us in this place the worship now used; for the circumscribed worship of the priests is brought to an end, and every place is accounted fit for the worship of God, and the sacrifice of irrational victims is ended, and I, our spotless Lamb, Who taketh away the sin of the world, is sacrificed."

Lastly, S. Augustine, "*Malachi, prophesying of the Church which we see propagated through Christ, says most plainly to the Jews in the person of God, I have no pleasure in you, and will not receive an offering at your hands. For from the rising of the sun &c.* Since we see this sacrifice through the priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchisedek, now offered to God in every place from the rising of the sun to its setting; but the sacrifice of the Jews, of which it is said, *I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering from your hands*, they cannot deny to have ceased; why do they yet expect another Christ, since what they read as prophesied and see fulfilled, could not be fulfilled, except through Him?"

12. *And ye have profaned* [³are habitually profaning it], in that ye say. It was the daily result of their daily lives and acts. "It is probable that the priests did not use such words, but that by their very deeds, they proclaimed this aloud: as in the, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* For in that he is seen to be a despiser, though he say it not in words, yet, by their very deeds and by the crookedness of their lives, they all-but cry out, *There is no God.* For they who live as though God beheld not, and do all things recklessly and unholy, by their own deeds and works deny God. So they who are not

earnest to preserve to the holy Altar the reverence becoming to it, by the very things which they do, say,

The table of the Lord is despised. Not the table of shewbread, since it is so called in reference to the sacrifice offered thereon. Ezekiel had probably so called the altar, which he saw in his vision of the new temple⁵. It is what was before called the *altar*; an altar, in regard to the sacrifices offered to God; a table, in regard to the food of the sacrifice therefrom received. Both names, "altar"⁶ and "table"⁷ being received in the New Testament, both were received in the early Church. For each represented one side of the great Eucharistic action, as it is a Sacrifice and a Sacrament. But the title "altar" was the earliest⁸.

It may be here a different profaneness of the priests. They connived at the sin of the people in sacrificing the maimed animals which they brought, and yet, since they had their food from the sacrifices, and such animals are likely to have been neglected and ill-conditioned, they may very probably have complained of the poverty of their lot, and despised the whole service. For the words used, *its produce, the eating thereof is contemptible* belong to their portion, not to what was consumed by fire. With this agrees their cry,

13. *What a weariness!* What an onerous service it is! The service of God is its own reward. If not, it becomes a greater toil, with less reward from this earth, than the things of this earth. Our only choice is between love and weariness.

*And ye have snuffed [puffed] at it*⁹, i.e. at the altar; as a thing contemptible. *Ye have brought that which was taken by violence*¹⁰. In despising any positive law of God, they despised the lawgiver; and so, from contempt of the ceremonial law, they went on to break the moral law. It were in-

separate passages (beside two met. Joh. xxiv. 19, Pr. iv. 16.) It is used specially of the robbery of the poor, whether by wrong judgment (Eccl. v. 7, [Heb.] Is. x. 2) or open violence. The meaning "torn" was gained, as if the animal had been carried off by beasts (θηρίων), the eating of which was forbidden, Ex. xxii. 30, Lev. vii. 24, xxii. 8. Ezek. iv. 14, xlv. 31. But this had its own name, שֶׁרֶפֶד, and could not be used in sacrifices, since it was dead already.

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 8.

² de Civ. Dei. xviii. 35. 3.

³ אָתָּם כֹּהֲלֵי־אֱהֵרָא

⁴ S. Cyr.

⁵ Ezek. xlv. 16.

⁶ S. Matt. v. 23, Heb. xlii. 10.

⁷ 1 Cor. x. 21.

⁸ Ignat. ad Philad. n. 4. p. 32. Cotel.

⁹ This too is one of the Tikkunē Sopherim, as if, had it not been profane, the prophet would have said, *at Me.* On the character of these hypothetic corrections, see on Hab. i. 12. p. 180. n. 17.

¹⁰ This is the one sense of שֶׁרֶפֶד, which occurs in 34

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that which was torn, and
the lame, and the sick:
thus ye brought an offer-
ing: *should I accept this of
your hand? saith the LORD.

* Lev. 22. 20, &c.

* ver. 8.
! Or, in whose
flock is.

14 But cursed be *the
deceiver, || which hath in

his flock a male, and vow-
eth, and sacrificeth unto
the Lord a corrupt thing:
for *I am a great King,
saith the LORD of hosts,
and my name is dreadful
among the heathen.

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* Ps. 4. 2.
1 Tim. 6. 15.

deed a mockery of God, to break a law whereby He bound man to man, and therefrom to seek to appease Himself. Yet in rough times, people, even in Christianity, have made their account with their souls, by giving to the poor a portion of what they had taken from the rich. "God," it was said to such an one, "rejects the gifts obtained by violence and robbery. He loves mercy, justice and humanity, and by the lovers of these only will He be worshiped." "He that sacrificeth of a thing wrongfully gotten, his offering is ridiculous, and the gifts of unjust men are not accepted. The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the wicked, neither is He pacified for sin by the multitude of sacrifices. Whoso bringeth an offering of the goods of the poor doeth as one that killeth the son before the father's eyes."

14. *Cursed is the deceiver.* "The fraudulent, hypocritical, false or deceitful dealer, who makes a show of one thing, and doth or intends another, nor doth to his power what he would make a show of doing; as if he could deceive God in doing in His service otherwise than He required, and yet be accepted by Him." The whole habit of these men was not to break with God, but to keep well with Him on as easy terms as they could. They even went beyond what the law required in making vows, probably for some temporal end, and then substituted for that which had typical perfection, the less valuable animal, the ewe³, and that, diseased. It was probably, to prevent self-deceit, that the law commanded that the oblation for a vow should be *"a male without blemish, perfect; lest (which may be a temptation in impulsive vows) repenting of their vow, they should persuade themselves, that they had vowed less than they had. Ordinarily, then, it would not have been allowed to one, who had not the best to offer, to vow at all. But, in their alleged poverty, the prophet supposes that God would so far dispense with His own law, and accept the best which any*

one had, although it did not come up to that law. Hence the clause, *which hath in his flock a male.* "If thou hast not a male, that curse in no wise injureth thee. But saying this, he sheweth, that they have what is best, and offer what is bad."

They sinned, not against religion only, but against justice also. "For as a merchant, who offers his goods at a certain price, if he supply them afterward adulterated and corrupted, is guilty of fraud and is unjust, so he who promised to God a sacrifice worthy of God, and, according to the law, perfect and sound, is fraudulent and sins against justice, if he afterward gives one, defective, mutilated, vitiated, and is guilty of theft in a sacred thing, and so of sacrilege."

Clergy or "all who have vowed, should learn hence, that what they have vowed should be given to God, entire, manly, perfect, the best.—For, reverence for the supreme and Divine Majesty to Whom they consecrate themselves demandeth this, that they should offer Him the highest, best and most perfect, making themselves a whole-burnt-offering to God."

"They who abandon all things of the world, and kindle their whole mind with the fire of Divine love, these become a sacrifice and a whole-burnt-offering to Almighty God." "Man himself, consecrated and devoted in the name of God, is a sacrifice." He then offers a corrupt thing who, like Ananias, keeps back *part of the price*, and is the more guilty, because, while it was his own, it was in his own power.

I am a great King. "As God is Alone Lord through His universal Providence and His intrinsic authority, so He Alone is King, and a King so great, that of His greatness or dignity and perfection there is no end."

My Name is dreadful among the heathen. Absence of any awe of God was a central defect of these Jews. They treated Him, as they would not a fellow-creature, for whom they had any respect or awe or fear. Some remaining instinct kept them from parting

his flock is a male; and he who voweth &c.:" but then nothing would be said, wherein the deceit consisted.

⁴ Levit. xlii. 10, 21.

⁵ S. Jer.

⁶ Lap.

⁷ S. Greg. in Ezek. L. i. Hom. xii. 30. Opp. i. 305 Ben. L.

⁸ S. Aug. de Civ. Dei. x. 6. L.

⁹ Dion.

¹ Eccles. xxxiv. 18-20.

² Poc.

מִשְׁחָת fem. for מִשְׁחָת, as מִשְׁחָת for מִשְׁחָת, Kgs i. 15. and מִשְׁחָת Lev. ii. 5, Ewald Lehrs. n. 188. p. 495 ed. 8. Keil would read מִשְׁחָת (masc.) and make it a separate case, "the deceiver, whereas in

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CHAPTER II.

1 *He sharply reproveth the priests for neglecting their covenant, 11 and the people for idolatry, 14 for adultery, 17 and for infidelity.*

AND now, O ye priests, this commandment is

* Lev. 26. 14, &c. for you.
Deut. 28. 13, &c.

2 * If ye will not hear,

with Him; but they yielded a cold, wearisome, heartless service. Malachi points to the root of the evil, the ignorance, how awful God is. This is the root of so much irreverence in people's theories, thoughts, conversations, systems, acts, of the present day also. They know neither God or themselves. The relation is summed up in those words to a saint¹, "Knowest thou well, Who I am, and who thou art? I am He Who Is, and thou art she who is not." So Job says in the presence of God, ²*I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.* To correct this, God, from the beginning, insists on the title which He gives Himself. ³*Circumcise the foreskin of your hearts and be no more stiff-necked: for the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty and the terrible; and in warning, ⁴If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord thy God, then the Lord thy God will make thy plagues wonderful &c.*

II. 1. And now this is My commandment unto you, not a commandment, which He gave them, but a commandment in regard to them. As God said of old, upon obedience, ⁵*I will command My blessing unto you, so now He would command what should reach them, but a curse.* ⁶*He returns from the people to the priests, as the fountain of the evil, whose carelessness about things sacred he had rebuked before. Let the priests of the new law hear this rebuke of God, and conceive it dictated to them by the Holy Spirit to hear, from whom God rightly requires greater holiness, and so will punish them more grievously, if careless or scandalous in their office.*" All Christians are, in some sense, ⁷*a royal, holy priesthood, over and above the special "Christian priesthood;" as the*

and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

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Jews, over and above the special priesthood of Aaron, were a ⁸*kingdom of priests.* What follows then belongs, in their degree, to them and their duties.

2. *If ye will not lay to heart, viz. the rebukes addressed to them, to give glory to God.* For the glory of God is the end and aim of the priesthood. This should be the principle and rule of their whole life, ⁹*"to the greater glory of God."* *I will send the curse upon you, viz. that which He had threatened in the law upon disobedience; and will curse your blessings, will turn your blessings into a curse.* He does not say, I will send you curses instead of blessings, but, I will make the blessings themselves a curse. ¹⁰*The things which should have been to their wealth became to them an occasion of falling; to the proud, the things which lift them up; to the gluttonous, their abundance; to the avaricious, their wealth; which, if used to the glory of God, become blessings, do, when self not God is their end, by God's dispensation and Providence, become a curse to them.* ¹¹*The goods of nature, the goods of fortune, the goods of the Church allowed to you, I will turn to your greater damnation, permitting you to abuse them to pride; and your damnation shall be the more penal, the more good things ye have received from Me.* Whence Christ declares in the Gospel, ¹²*Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."*

Yea, I have cursed them [lit. it], i.e. each one of the blessings, already. God's judgments as well as His mercies are individual with a minute care, shewing that it is His doing. The curse had already gone forth, and had begun to seize upon them from the time that they began to despise His Name. His judgments do not break in at once, but little by little, with warnings of their approach, that so we may turn to Him, and escape the wrath to come.

¹ S. Catherine of Sienna.

² Job xlii. 5, 6.

³ Deut. x. 16, 17, vii. 21. Nehemiah uses it in his prayers (i. 5, ix. 32) and Daniel (ix. 4.) It occurs also Neh. iv. 8 (14 Eng.) Ps. xlvii. 3, lxviii. 36, lxxxix. 8, xevi. 4, xcix. 3, cxi. 9, Zeph. ii. 11.

⁴ Deut. xxviii. 53, 59.

⁵ Lev. xxv. 21. וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם.

⁶ Lap.

⁷ 1 S. Pet. ii. 9.

⁸ Ex. xix. 6.

⁹ "Ad majorem Dei gloriam," the motto of S. Ignatius Loyola.

¹⁰ Ps. lxi. 23.

¹¹ Dion.

¹² S. Luke xii. 48.

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3 Behold, I will || corrupt your seed, and || spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and || one shall ^btake you away with it.

† Or, *reprove*.
† Heb. *scatter*.

† Or, *it shall take you away to it*.

^b 1 Kin. 14. 10.

4 And ye shall know

that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

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5 ° My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them

Num. 25. 12.
Ezek. 34. 25.
& 37. 26.

3. *Lo, I will rebuke the seed¹ for your sake*, i. e. that it should not grow. He Who worketh by His sustaining will all the operations of nature, would at His will withhold them. Neither priests nor Levites cultivated the soil; yet, since the tithes were assigned to them, the diminution of the harvest affected them. The meal-offering too was a requisite part of the sacrifice².

And spread dung upon your faces, the dung³ of your solemn feasts, or, of your sacrifices⁴. It was by the law carried without the camp and burned with the animal itself. They had brought before the face of God maimed, unfitting sacrifices; they should have them cast back, with their refuse, upon them; "⁵ as a lord that rejecteth a gift, brought to him by his servant, casts it back in his face."⁶ *Of your sacrifices, not of Mine; for I am not worshiped in them: ye seek to please, not Me, but yourselves.*" So God said of Eli, ⁷ *them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.*

And one shall take you away with it, lit. to it. They should be swept away, as if they were an appendage to it, as God said, ⁸ *I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till all be gone.* As are the offerings, so shall it be with the offerers.

4. *And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you:* this, which He had just uttered. They who believe not God when threatening, know that He is in earnest and not to be trifled with, through His punishing. *That My covenant might be with Levi⁹.* God willed to punish those who at that time rebelled against Him, that He

might spare those who should come after them. He chastened the fathers, who shewed their contempt toward Him, that their sons, taking warning thereby, might not be cut off. He continues to say, what the covenant was, which He willed still to be, if they would repent.

5. *My covenant was with him life and peace; lit. the life and the peace; that, which alone is true life and peace.* The covenant was not with Levi himself, but with Aaron, his representative, with whom the covenant was made in the desert, as is indeed here expressed; and, in him, with all his race¹⁰ after him, who succeeded him in his office; as, when it is said, that ¹¹ *Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of burnt offering*, it must needs be understood, not of Aaron in person alone and his sons then living, but of any of his race that succeeded in his and their room. So our Lord promised to be with His Apostles, ¹² *always to the end of the world*, i. e. with them and those whom they should appoint in their stead, and these others, until He should Himself come. God promised, if they would keep the law, that they should live in peace on the earth; yea, that they should have peace of mind and a life of grace. *Life* is an indefectible being, which man does not forfeit by sin, to which death is no interruption, changing only the place of the soul's life.

And I gave them to him, in, or as, fear, ¹³ *Fear, not servile but filial and pure, as S. Paul bids Christians, ¹⁴ work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*" God gave them an awful gift, to be held with fear

¹ Kell objects to this rendering of the text and adopts the punctuation קָרַבְתִּי from lxx. Aq. Vulg. "the arm," i. e. render it useless and incapable of discharging its office. But when קָרַב is used of other than men themselves, it is a whole, as to which the metaphor is used, either being animate, as "the devourer," Mal. iii. 11, or pictured as animate, as "the sea," Pa. cvi. 9. Nah. i. 4.

² See also Joel i. 13. ii. 14.

³ קָרַב is only used of the dung, as it lies in the animal killed for sacrifice, Ex. xxix. 4, Lev. iv. 11, viii. 7, xxi. 27, Nu. xix. 5, and here.

⁴ קָרַב is certainly the animal sacrificed at the feast, Ex. xxiii. 18, Pa. cxviii. 27, and so probably here. So Kim.

⁵ Abarb. Poc.

⁶ Rib.

⁷ 1 Sam. ii. 30.

⁸ 1 Kgs xiv. 10.

⁹ Kell says that קָרַב means indeed to "exist," but not to "continue existence." But the continuance is involved in the existence in the future, for the being in the future involves the continued being. His own rendering, "that this should be My covenant with Levi;" requires a more definite subject; and it should rather be, "that My covenant with Levi should come to this." In ver. 5, 6, he speaks of the past emphatically, "My covenant was with him," "the law of truth was in his mouth." So it shall be with you, if you become like him.

¹⁰ By the art. in קָרַב v. 8. See Num. xxv. 12, 13.

¹¹ 1 Chr. vi. 49.

¹² S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

¹³ Dion.

¹⁴ Phil. ii. 12.

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to him ⁴for the fear where-
with he feared me, and
was afraid before my name.

⁴Deut. 33. 8, 9.

and awe, for its very preciousness, as one would hold anxiously what is very precious, yet very fragile and easily marred.

And he feared Me, and was afraid before My Name. Malachi unites two words, the second expressive of strong fear, by which a man is, as it were, crushed or broken. They are often united in Hebrew, but as expressing terror, which men are bidden not to feel before men. Toward man it is ever said, ¹ *fear not, neither be ye dismayed*; toward God Alone, it is a matter of praise. Man's highest fear is too little; for he knows not, Who God is. So Isaiah says, ² *Fear ye not their fear [the fear of this people], nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear and let Him be your dread.* ³ *What can be more precious (than this fear)? For it is written, 'He who feareth the Lord will be rewarded.'* ⁴ *The fear of the Lord is honor and glory and gladness and a crown of rejoicing.* He saith, *the fear, where-with he feareth Me and was afraid*, i. e. he received the fear of God in his whole heart and soul. For these reduplications and emphases suggest to the hearer how rooted in virtue are those thus praised.

6. *The law of truth was in his mouth.* Apart from those cases, which were brought to the priests at the tabernacle⁶, in which their voice was the voice of God through them, to teach the law was part of the office both of the priest and Levite. Of the priest God says; ⁷ *that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes, which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses*: of the tribe of Levi generally Moses says, ⁸ *They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments and Israel Thy law.* After the schism of the ten tribes, a prophet says to Asa, that Israel had ⁹ *for a long time been without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law.* They are evil times, of which Ezekiel says, ¹⁰ *the law shall perish from the priest*; and God says of corrupt priests, ¹¹ *The priest said not, where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew Me not.* ¹² *They did violence to My law.* On their return from the captivity Ezra was known to Artaxerxes as ¹³ *a scribe of the law of the God of heaven*, and he looked upon him apparently, as one who should keep the peo-

6 •The law of truth
was in his mouth, and in-
iquity was not found in •Deut. 33. 10.

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ple in good order by teaching it. ¹⁴ *Thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God which is in thy hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people which are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not: and whosoever will not do the law of thy God or the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him.* Ezra says of himself, that he ¹⁵ *had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.*

¹⁶ *God's law is the truth*: the true doctrine of this law did he teach the people, and instruct them in the true meaning and intent thereof, that, according to the right rule, they might frame all their actions; nothing of it did he conceal from them, nor teach any thing contrary to it or false. This was in his mouth; nothing contrary to it was found in his lips.

And iniquity was not found in his lips. He expresses the perfectness of that teaching, first positively, then negatively. The true priest taught truth without any admixture of wrong. ¹⁷ *Not he only is a betrayer of the truth, who, transgressing the truth, openly teaches a lie for the truth*; but he too, who does not freely utter the truth, which he ought to utter freely, or who does not freely defend the truth which he ought to defend freely, is a betrayer of the truth. ¹⁸ *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* "Nothing," says S. Ambrose ¹⁹ to the Emperor Theodosius, "is so perilous to the priest with God, so disgraceful with men, as not to utter freely what he thinks. For it is written, ²¹ *I spake of Thy testimonies before kings, and was not ashamed.* And therefore a priest's silence ought to displease your Clemency; his freedom, to please you. For you are involved in the peril of my silence, art aided by the good of my free speech."

He walked with Me. To awe of God, truthfulness of teaching, he adds a devout continual intercourse with God. Like the patriarchs of old, Enoch and Noah, he ²² *walked with God.* He not only lived in the Presence, but walked up and down with Him, through his whole life, as a Friend;

¹ Deut. i. 21, xxxi. 9, Josh. i. 9, x. 25, i Chr. xxii. 13, xxviii. 20, 2 Chr. xx. 15, 17, xxxii. 7, Is. ii. 7, Jer. xxxii. 4, xxx. 10, xlvii. 27, Ez. ii. 6, iii. 9.

² Is. viii. 12, 13.

³ S. Cyr.

⁴ Pr. xlii. 13.

⁶ Ecclus. i. 11.

⁷ Deut. xvii. 9, 10, 11, xix. 17; (add Deut. xxi. 5, Ezek. xlv. 24, 25.) hence the use of מִן־הַנֶּזֶק. Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7, 8.

⁷ Lev. x. 11. ⁸ Deut. xxxiii. 10. ⁹ 2 Chr. xv. 3.

¹⁰ Ezek. vii. 26.

¹¹ Jer. ii. 8.

¹² Ezek. xxii. 26, Zeph. iii. 4. ¹³ Ezr. vii. 12, 21.

¹⁴ Is. xxi. 26, 25. ¹⁵ Is. lx. ¹⁶ Ps. cxix. 142.

¹⁷ Opus imp. in S. Matt. ap. S. Chrys. Hom. 25. T.

vi. App. p. cix. Ben.

¹⁹ Rom. x. 10.

²⁰ S. Ambr. Ep. xi. ad Theod. n. 2. 3. Ben. L.

²¹ Ps. cxix. 46.

²² Gen. v. 24, vi. 9.

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his lips: he walked with
me in peace and equity,
and did 'turn many away
from iniquity.
7 ⁸ For the priest's lips
Jer. 23. 22.
Jam. 5. 20.
Lev. 10. 11.
Deut. 17. 9, 10.
& 24. 8.
Ezra 7. 10.
Jer. 18. 18. Hag. 2. 11, 12.

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should keep knowledge,
and they should seek the
law at his mouth: ² for ³ Gal. 4. 14.
he is the messenger of the
LORD of hosts.

"having respect in all things to Him and His glory."

In peace and equity. The inward peace with God overflowing in peace to men. The brief words comprise the duties of both tables; as that, ¹ *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God; ² Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you; ³ blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.* "God's covenant with him was of peace"; so he observed it on his part." Even equity, or real considerate justice, would alienate those, whom it found wrong, so he joins with it peace, that even equity was not administered but with love. "To have peace with God, what is it but to will to be mended and to do what He willeth, and in nothing to offend Him?"

And turned away many from iniquity. They, the true priests of the Old Testament then, were not satisfied with their own sanctification, but were zealous for the salvation of souls. What a history of zeal for the glory of God and the conversion of sinners in those, of whom the world knows nothing; of whose working, but for the three words ¹ in the closing book of the Old Testament, we should have known nothing! The Prophets upbraid the sins of the many; the Psalms are the prayers given to and used by the pious; such incidental sayings as these, record some of the fruits. "Be of the disciples of Aaron," said Hillel ², "who loved peace and followed peace; and who loved men and brought them near to the law." Yet even under the Gospel S. Gregory complains, "³ The world is full of priests; yet in the harvest of God the laborers are few. For we undertake the priestly office, but do not fulfil its work. We receive the fruit of holy Church in daily stipend, but labor not for the everlasting Church in preaching." "⁴ There are many priests," says a writer in the IVth cent., "and few priests; many in name, few in deed. See then, how ye sit on your thrones; for the throne maketh not the priest, but the priest the throne; the place sanctifieth not the man, but the man

the place. Whoso sitteth well on the throne, receiveth honor from the throne; whoso ill, doth injustice to the throne. Thou sittest in judgment. If thou livest well and teachest well, thou wilt be a judge of all; if thou teachest well and livest ill, thine own only. For by teaching well and living well thou instructest the people, how it ought to live; by teaching well and living ill, thou teachest God, how He should condemn thee." "⁵ We who are called priests, above the ills which we have of our own, add also the deaths of others. For we slay as many as we, in tepidity and silence, see daily go to death.—He who is placed under thee dies without thee, when in that which causes his death, thou hast withstood him. For to that death, which thou hast not withstood, thou wilt be added."

7. *For the priest's lips should keep knowledge.* "⁶ He assigns the reason for what he had just said, *the law of truth was in his mouth*; they had done what it was their duty to do; as in Ecclesiasticus it is said of Aaron; "⁷ God gave unto him His commandments, and authority in the statutes of judgments, that he should teach Jacob the testimonies, and inform Israel in His laws." So S. Paul requires of Titus to ordain such Bishops, as shall be able to "⁸ exhort by sound doctrine and to convince gainsayers. Wherefore S. Ambrose ⁹ calls the Bible, which contains the law of God, 'the book of priests,' as specially belonging to them, to be specially studied by them. S. Jerome notes that he says keep, not 'give forth,' that they should speak seasonably, and give their fellow-servants meat in due season."

For he is the messenger [or angel] of the Lord of hosts. Malachi gives to the priest the title which belongs to the lowest order of the heavenly spirits, as having an office akin to theirs; as Haggai does to the prophet ¹⁰, as an extraordinary messenger of God; and S. Paul tells the Galatians, "¹¹ ye received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus; and Christ, by S. John, speaks to the Bishops of the seven Churches, good or bad, or of mixed good and bad, as the angels ¹² of those Churches.

¹⁰ Op. Imperf. in S. Matt. cxlii. Hom. xlii. App. p. clix. Ben. L.

¹¹ S. Greg. Hom. in Ezek. L. 1. Hom. xi. nn. 2. and 11. Opp. 1. 1285. L.

¹² Lap. ¹³ Ecclus. xiv. 17. ¹⁴ Tit. 1. 9.

¹⁵ de fide lli. c. 15. n. 128. Opp. 1. 519. Ben.

¹⁶ Hagg. ii. 11. ¹⁷ Gal. iv. 14. ¹⁸ Rev. 1. 20.

¹ Heb. xii. 14. Rom. xii. 18. ² Cor. xlii. 11.

³ S. Matt. v. 9. ⁴ Poc. ⁵ ver. 5. ⁶ S. Cyr.

⁷ רבנים השכיב מעון.

⁸ Pirke Aboth c. 1. § 13 Poc.

⁹ S. Greg. Hom. xvii. in Evang. n. 3 and 8. Opp. 1. 1406, 1499. Ben. L.

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¹ Sam. 2. 17.
Jer. 18. 15.
¹ Or, *fall in the law.*
² Neh. 13. 29.

8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

"¹ Since in the heavenly hierarchy the order of Angels is the lowest, and in the Eucharistical hierarchy the order of the priesthood is the highest," "² most truly is the priest of God called angel, i. e. messenger, because he intervenes between God and man, and announces the things of God to the people; and therefore were the Urim and Thummim placed on the priest's breast-plate of judgment, that we might learn, that the priest ought to be learned, a herald of Divine truth." Much more in the New Testament. "³ Who, as it were in a day, can form one of earth, to be the defender of truth, to stand with angels, to give glory with Archangels, to transmit the sacrifices to the altar above, to be partaker of the priesthood of Christ, to reform the thing formed, and present the image, to re-create for the world above, to be a god and make men partakers of the Divine Nature?" "⁴ The priesthood is enacted on earth, but is ranked with the heavenly ranks. Very rightly. For not man, not angel, not archangel, not any other created power, but the Paraclete Himself hath ordained this office, and persuaded them, while yet abiding in the flesh, to conceive the ministry of the Angels. Wherefore, he who is consecrated as priest, ought to be pure, as if he stood among the heavenly powers." "⁵ The throne of the priesthood is placed in the heavens, and he is entrusted with ministering things of heaven. Who saith this? The King of heaven Himself. For He saith, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.*—So the priest standeth in the middle between God and human nature, bringing down to us Divine benefits, and transmitting thither our supplications."

8. But ye⁹ are departed out of the way of knowledge, truth, equity, fear of God, which I appointed to Aaron and the Levites. Ye have caused many to stumble at the law. He does not simply say, in the law, but at it. The law was what they stumbled at. They

9 Therefore have I also made you contempti-

ble and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but ye have been partial in the law.

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¹ Sam. 2. 30.
¹ Or, *lifted up the face against.*
[†] Heb. *accepted faces.*

did not only misunderstand the law, through the false teaching of the priests, as though it allowed things which in truth were sins (although this too); itself was their source of stumbling. As Jesus Himself was a rock of offence whereon they stumbled, because through His Divine holiness He was not what they expected Him to be, so contrariwise the law became an offence to them through the unholiness and inconsistency of the lives and ways of those who taught it; much as we now hear Christianity spoken against, because of the inconsistency of Christians. So S. Paul saith to the Jews, "¹ The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written; and, for the sins of Eli's sons¹², men abhorred the offering of the Lord.

And have corrupted the covenant of Levi; as it is said in Nehemiah, "¹³ They have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood and of Levi, that covenant which was life and peace¹⁴, and therefore forfeited them.

9. Therefore have I made you contemptible. They had said in their hearts, "¹⁵ The table of the Lord is contemptible. So God would requite them "¹⁶ measure for measure." Yet not only so, but in their office as judges, against the repeated protestations in the law, "¹⁷ Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor; "¹⁸ ye shall not respect persons in judgment; "¹⁹ thou shalt not wrest judgment, he says,

Ye have accepted persons in the law. You have interpreted the law differently for rich and poor, or have put it in force against the poor, not against the rich. It would include actual bribery; but there are many more direct offences against equal justice. How differently is the like offence against the eighth commandment visited upon the poor who have real temptation to it, and the rich who have none, but the lust of the eyes!

"Crows he condones, vexes the simple dove."

That contempt which they cast upon God and His law, by wresting it out of respect to

¹ Dion.

² S. Greg. Naz. Orat. ii. n. 73. p. 48 Ben.

³ συνέκτιστον.

⁴ Θεον ἐσθλόνον και θεοποιήσαντα.

⁵ 2 S. Pet. i. 4.

⁶ S. Chrys. de Sacerdotio iii. 4. Opp. i. 382 Ben.

⁸ Id. in Is. vi. 1. Hom. v. 1. Opp. vi. 132.

⁹ ὁμοῦ, emphatic.

¹⁰ Rom. ii. 24. ¹¹ 1 Sam. ii. 17. Poc. ¹² Neh. xiii. 29.

¹³ ii. 5. ¹⁴ i. 7.

¹⁵ Kim. ¹⁶ Lev. xix. 15.

¹⁷ Deut. i. 17.

¹⁸ Ib. xlv. 19.

¹⁹ Ib. xlv. 19.

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10 ^m Have we not all one father? ^a hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

11 ¶ Judah hath dealt

^m 1 Cor. 8. 6.
^a Eph. 4. 6.
^a Job 31. 15.

persons, that so they might gain favor and respect from them, so honoring them more than Him, and seeking to please them more than Him, will He cast back on them making them contemptible even in the eyes of those, from whom they thought by that means to find respect.

10. *Have we not all one Father?* ¹ *Hath not one God created us?* Malachi turns abruptly to another offence, in which also the priests set an evil example, the capricious dismissal of their Hebrew wives and taking other women in their stead. Here, as before, he lays down, at the outset, a general moral principle, which he applies. *The one Father*, (it appears from the parallel), is manifestly Almighty God, as the Jews said to our Lord, ² *We have one Father, even God.* He created them, not only as He did all mankind, but by the spiritual relationship with Himself, into which He brought them. So Isaiah speaks, ³ *Thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel. Every one that is called by My Name; I have created Him for My glory; I have formed him; yea I have made him. This people have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise.* And from the first in Moses' song, ⁴ *Is not He thy Father that created thee? Hath He not made thee and established thee?* This creation of them by God, as His people, gave them a new existence, a new relation to each other; so that every offence against each other was a violation of their relation to God, Who had given them this unity, and was, in a nearer sense than of any other, the common Father of all. *Why then*, the prophet adds, *do we deal treacherously, a man against his brother, to profane the covenant of our fathers?* He does not yet say, wherein this treacherous dealing consisted; but awakens them to the thought, that sin against a

¹ Jews (Ibn E., Tanchum, Kim. Aharb. ap. Poe.) have understood the *one father* to be Jacob; S. Cyril, to be Abraham. The parallelism is, I think, decisive against both. Although Abraham is specially spoken of as their father, yet the appeal to that relation would not hold against the marriage, condemned here, since he was the father of the descendants of Ishmael as of Isaac, of the bitterest foes of Israel, the heathenish Edomites. Ammon and Moab, inveterate persecutors of Israel, were his near kindred. Ammonitesses and Moabitesses were as

treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he || loved, ¹ and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

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¹ Or, ought to love.
^a Ezra 9. 1.
^a 10. 2.
Neh. 13. 23.

brother is sin against God, Who made him a brother; as, and much more under the Gospel, in which we are all members of one mystical body; ^a *when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.* He speaks of the sin, as affecting those who did not commit it. Why do we deal treacherously? So Isaiah, before his lips were cleansed by the mystical coal, said, ¹ *I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and the high-priest Joshua was shewn in the vision, clothed with defiled garments*²; and the sin of Achan became the sin of the children of Israel³, and David's sinful pride in numbering the people was visited upon all⁴. He teaches beforehand, that, ⁵ *whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.* They profaned also the covenant of their fathers, by marrying those whom God forbade, and who would seduce, as heathen wives had Solomon, from His worship. S. Paul in sanctioning the remarriage of widows, adds, only⁶ *in the Lord*, i.e. Christian husbands. ⁷ *He who treated as null the difference between the Israelites and a heathen woman, shewed that the difference between the God of Israel and the God of the heathen had before become null to him, whence it follows;*

11. *Treacherously has Judah dealt; an abomination is committed in Israel.* The prophet, by the order of the words, emphasizes the *treachery* and the *abomination*. This have they done; the very contrary to what was required of them as the people of God. He calls the remnant of Judah by the sacred name of the whole people, of whom they were the surviving representatives. The word "abomination"⁸ is a word belonging to the Hebrew, and is used especially of

much forbidden by Ezra (ix. 2) as women of the different nations of Canaan, Ashdod or Egypt.

² S. John viii. 41.

³ Is. xliii. 1. 7. 21. add xlv. 2, 21, 24.

⁴ Deut. xxxii. 6.

⁵ 1 Cor. viii. 12.

⁶ Zech. iii. 3, 4. See ab. pp. 354, 355.

⁷ Josn. vii. 1, 11.

⁸ 1 Cor. xii. 26.

⁹ Hengst. Christ. iii. 595.

אֲבִי קֵן

¹ Is. vi. 5.

² Sam. xxiv.

³ 1 Th. vii. 39.

רֹאשׁ הָעֵבֶר

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[Or, him that
watcheth, and
him that an-
swereth.

² Neh. 13. 28, 29.

12 The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, || the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, ² and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts.

13 And this have ye

things offensive to, or separating from, Almighty God; idolatry, as the central dereliction of God, and involving offences against the laws of nature, but also all other sins, as adultery, which violate His most sacred laws and alienate from Him.

Hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which He loved, in themselves, who had been separated and set apart by God to Himself as a ¹ holy nation. ² Israel was holiness to the Lord. ³ The Lord is holy, perfect holiness; His name, holy; all things relating to Him, holy; His law, covenant and all His ordinances and institutions holy; Israel, His peculiar people, a holy people; the temple and all things therein consecrated to Him, holy; Jerusalem, the city of the great God, holy; yea, the whole land of His inheritance, holy; so that whosoever doth not observe those due respects which to any of these belong, may be said to have *profaned the holiness which He loved*.

Unlawful marriages and unlawful lusts were in themselves a special profanation of that holiness. The high priest was to ⁴ take a virgin of his own people to wife, and not to profane his seed among the people. The priests who married strange wives, defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood ⁵. The marriage with idolatresses brought, as one consequence, the profanation by their idolatries. The prohibition is an anticipation of the fuller revelation in the Gospel, that ⁶ the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and so, that sins against the body are profanations of the temple of God. ⁷ As those who acknowledge, worship and serve the true God are called His ⁸ sons and daughters, so they that worshipped any strange god are, by like reason, here called the daughters of that god. Hence the Jews say, ⁹ He that marrieth a heathen woman is, as if he made himself son-in-law to an idol. ¹⁰

Hath married the daughter of a strange god.

¹ Ex. xix. 6.

² Jer. ii. 3.

³ Psa. ciii. 29.

⁴ Lev. xxi. 14, 15.

⁵ 1 Cor. vi. 15-20.

⁶ Deut. xxxii. 19, 2 Cor. vi. 18.

⁷ Matt. in Issue blasphemous, c. 12 § 1. Psa.

⁸ Matt. "the awakener," as if $\gamma\lambda$ were active: for

$\gamma\lambda$ is always intransitive, except in the correction

done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

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And so he came into closest relation with idols and with devils.

12. *The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar*, lit. *The Lord cut off from the man that doeth this, watcher¹ and answerer*. A proverbial saying apparently, in which the two corresponding classes comprise the whole². Yet so, probably, that the one is the active agent; the other, the passive. The one as a *watcher* goes his rounds, to see that nothing stirreth against that which he is to guard; the other *answereth*, when roused. Together, they express the two opposite classes, active and passive sin; those who originate the sin, and those who adopt or retain it at the instigation of the inventor or active propagator of it. It will not exempt from punishment, that he was led into the sin.

From the tabernacles of Jacob. Perhaps "he chose the word, to remind them of their unsettled condition," out of which God had brought them.

And him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts; i. e. him, who, doing these things, offereth an offering to God, to bribe Him, as it were, to connivance at his sin. In the same meaning, Isaiah says, that God hateth ³ iniquity and the solemn meeting, and, ⁴ I hate robbery with burnt-offering; or Solomon, ⁵ The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; ⁶ he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, his prayer shall be an abomination. And God by Amos says, ⁷ I hate, I despise, your feast-days, and will not accept your solemn assemblies. In one sense the sacrifice was an aggravation, in that the worship of God made the offence either a sin against light, or implied that God might be bribed into connivance in the breaking of His laws. The ancient discipline of removing from Communion those guilty of grievous sin was founded on this principle.

13. *And this ye have done again*, adding the second sin of cruelty to their wives to the

of the text, Job xii. 2. In Chald. עיר is "a watcher." Dan. iv. 10, 14.

² Dietrich, Abhandl. zur Hebr. Gram. p. 201 sqq., has instances from the Arabic, but not so energetic as those in the O. T., except when they are the same.

³ Isa. i. 13.

⁴ Ib. lxi. 8.

⁵ Prov. xv. 8.

⁶ Ib. xxviii. 9. ⁷ See vol. i. p. 299 on Am. v. 21.

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14 ¶ Yet ye say,
Wherefore? Because the
LORD hath been witness
between thee and the
wife of thy youth, against
whom thou hast dealt
treacherously: yet is she

Prov. 5. 18.

Prov. 2. 17.

taking foreign women; they covered the altar of God with tears, in that they by ill-treatment occasioned their wives to weep there to God; and God regarded this, as though they had stained the altar with their tears.

Insomuch that He regardeth not the offering any more. God regarded the tears of the oppressed, not the sacrifices of the oppressors. He would not accept what was thus offered Him as a thing well-pleasing to Him, acceptable to win His good pleasure.

14. And ye say, Wherefore? They again act the innocent, or half-ignorant. What had they to do with their wives' womanly tears? He Who knows the hearts of all was Himself the witness between them and the wife of youth of each; her to whom, in the first freshness of life and their young hearts, each had plighted his troth, having been entrusted by her with her earthly all. ²The Lord, said even Laban, when parting from his daughters, watch between me and thee, when we are absent, the one from the other; if thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness between me and thee.

And he dealt treacherously against her, violating his own faith and her trusting love, which she had given once for all, and could not now retract. And she is thy companion; she has been another self, the companion of thy life, sharing thy sorrows, joys, hopes, fears, interests; different in strength, yet in all, good and ill, sickness and health, thy associate and companion; the help meet for the husband and provided for him by God in Paradise; and above all, the wife of thy covenant, to whom thou didst pledge thyself before God. These are so many aggravations of their sin. She was the wife of their youth, of their covenant, their companion; and God was the witness and Sanctifier of their union. Marriage was instituted and consecrated by God in Paradise. Man was to leave father and mother (if so be), but to cleave to his wife indissolubly. For they were to be ³no more twain, but one flesh. Hence, as a remnant of Paradise, even the heathen knew of marriage, as a religious act, guarded

thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

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15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seed † a godly

Matt. 19. 4, 5.

Or, excellency.
† Heb. a seed of God.
Ezra 9. 2.
1 Cor. 7. 14.

by religious sanctions. Among God's people, marriage was a *covenant of their God*. To that original institution of marriage he seems to refer in the following;

15. And did not He, God, of Whom he had spoken as the witness between man and his wife, make one, viz. Adam first, to mark the oneness of marriage and make it a law of nature, appointing "that out of man (created in His own image and similitude,) woman should take her beginning, and, knitting them together, did teach that it should never be lawful to put asunder those, whom He by matrimony had made one?" "Between those two, and consequently between all other married, to be born from them, He willed that there should be one indivisible union; for Adam could be married to no other save Eve, since no other had been created by God, nor could Eve turn to any other man than Adam, since there was no other in the world. 'Infringe not then this sanction of God, and unity of marriage, and degenerate not from your first parents, Adam and Eve.'" "If divorce had been good, Jesus says, God would not have made one man and one woman, but, having made one Adam, would have made two women, had He meant that he should cast out the one, bring in the other; but now by the mode of creation, He brought in this law, that each should have, throughout, the wife which he had from the beginning. This law is older than that about divorce, as much as Adam is older than Moses."

Yet had he the residue of the spirit; ⁶the breath of life, which He breathed into Adam, and man became a living soul. All the souls, which God would ever create, are His, and He could have called them into being at once. Yet in order to designate the unity of marriage, He willed to create but one. So our Lord argues against divorce, ⁹Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female? They both together are called one man¹⁰, and therefore should be of one mind and spirit also, the unity of which they ought faithfully to preserve.

¹ רצון.

² Gen. xxxi. 40, 60.

³ S. Matt. xix. 6.

⁴ Prov. ii. 17.

⁵ Marriage Service.

⁶ Lap.

⁷ S. Chrys. de libello repud. n 2. Opp. iii. 28. Ben. Rib.

⁸ Gen. ii. 7.

⁹ S. Matt. xix. 4-6.

¹⁰ Gen. i. 27.

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Or, *unfaith-
fully.*

*Deut. 24. 1.
Matt. 5. 32.
& 19. 8.

Or, *if he hate
her, put her
away.*

†Heb. *to put
away.*

seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal || treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16 For ^a the LORD, the God of Israel, saith || that he hateth † putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your

spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

17 ¶ * Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied *him*? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil *is* good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judg-

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*Isai 43. 24.
Amos 2. 13.
ch 3. 13, 14, 15.

And wherefore one? Seeking a seed of God, i. e. worthy of God; for from religious marriage, religious offspring may most be hoped from God; and by violating that law, those before the flood brought in a spurious, unsanctified generation, so that God in His displeasure destroyed them all. And take heed to your spirit¹, which ye too had from God, which was His, and which He willed in time to create. He closes, as he began, with an appeal to man's natural feeling, let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16. *He hateth putting away². He had allowed it for the hardness of their hearts, yet only in the one case of some extreme bodily foulness³, discovered upon marriage, and which the woman, knowing the law, concealed at her own peril. Not subsequent illness or any consequences of it, however loathsome (as leprosy), were a ground of divorce, but only this concealed foulness, which the husband found upon marriage. The capricious tyrannical divorce, God saith, He hateth: a word⁴ naturally used only*

as to sin, and so stamping such divorce as sin.

(*One covereth violence with his garment⁵ or, and violence covereth his garment⁶, or, it might be, in the same sense, he covereth his garment with violence⁷, so that it cannot be hid, nor washed away, nor removed, but envelopes him and his garment; and that, to his shame and punishment. It was, as it were, an outer garment of violence, as Asaph says, ⁸ violence covereth them as a garment; or David, ⁹ he clothed himself with cursing as with a garment. It was like a garment with fretting leprosy, unclean and making unclean, to be burned with fire¹⁰. Contrariwise, the redeemed saints had ¹¹ washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb. Having declared God's hatred of this their doing, he sums up in the same words, but more briefly; and this being so, ye shall take heed to your spirit, and not deal treacherously.*

17. *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. ¹² By your blasphemous words, full of unbelief and mistrust, you have in a man-*

¹The רוחכם, "your spirit," manifestly refers back to "the residue of the spirit;" שאר רוח which, he says, was God's.

²The E. M. "If he hate her, put her away," (which follows Jon.) seems to enjoin what Malachi reproves those for their cruelty to their wives, as also it gives an unbounded license of divorce.

³ערוך Deut. xxiv. 1, used of disgusting foulness in the chapter before, xxiii. 15.

⁴Things spoken of as objects of God's hatred, are, "a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren," Prov. vi. 16-19; "pride, arrogance, the evil way, and the froward mouth," Ib. viii. 13; idolatry, De. xvi. 22 Jer. xlv. 4, "robbery with burnt-offering," Is. lxi. 8; heathen abominations, Deut. xii. 31; worship with sin, Am. v. 21, Is. i. 14.

⁵No Jewish-Arabic writer notices the meaning, which Pococke suggested, and Gesenius, Fürst, Ewald follow; as if לבוש signified "wife," because in the Koran לבان is used, not directly for "husband" or "wife," but in its original sense, "cover-

ing," of each reciprocally, הן לבאם לכם ואנתם (לבאם להן) "they (your wives) are a garment to you, and you are a garment to them." So Abimelech said to Sarah, "he [Abraham] is to thee a covering (כסוה) of the eyes, unto all which are with thee," (Gen. xx. 16). But לבאם does not signify, either husband or wife. In Arabic, حلة and ثوب loose dresses, (See Lane Arab. Lex. p. 53, 621) are used metaph. of a wife: (ثوب also of a person's self or family as well). But there is no trace of this in Heb.

⁶According to the constr., Nu. xvi. 33, Lev. iv. 8, Job xxi. 26, where the thing covering is the nominative and כן is put before the thing covered. So Vulg. and LXX. originally, as shewn by the Arabic transl., though now the LXX. has ἐνδύματα for ἐνδύματα. (De Dieu.)

⁷In Ez. xxiv. 7, Job xxxvi. 32, the thing covering is in the acc., with כן of thing covered.

⁸Ps. lxxiii. 4. ⁹Ib. cix. 18. ¹⁰Lev. xiii. 47-58. ¹¹Rev. vii. 14. ¹²Dion.

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CHAPTER III.

1 *Of the messenger, majesty and grace of Christ. 7 Of the rebellion, 8 sacrilege, 13 and infidelity of the people. 16 The promise of blessing to them that fear God.*

ner wearied God. He speaks of God, after the manner of men, as a man afflicted by the ills of others. Whence also the Lord says in Isaiah, *“I am weary to bear them, and thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins; thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities.”* In like way the Apostle says, *“Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.”*

With the same contumacy as before, and unconsciousness of sin, they ask, *Wherein?* It is the old temptation at the prosperity of the wicked. “Does God love the wicked? if not, why does He not punish them?” “The people, when returned from Babylon, seeing all the nations around, and the Babylonians themselves, serving idols but abounding in wealth, strong in body, possessing all which is accounted good in this world, and themselves, who had the knowledge of God, overwhelmed with want, hunger, servitude, is scandalized and says, ‘There is no providence in human things; all things are borne along by blind chance, and not governed by the judgment of God; nay rather, things evil please Him, things good displease Him; or if God does discriminate all things, where is His equitable and just judgment?’ Questions of this sort minds, which believe not in the world to come, daily raise to God, when they see the wicked in power, the saints in low estate; such as Lazarus, whom we read of in the Gospel, who, before the gate of the rich man in his purple, desires to support his hungry soul with the crumbs which are thrown away from the remnants of the table, while the rich man is of such savagery and cruelty, that he had no pity on his fellow-man, to whom the tongues of the dogs shewed pity; not understanding the time of judgment, nor that those are the true goods, which are for ever, say, He is pleased with the evil, and, Where is the God of judgment?”

Where is the God of the judgment? “*i. e.* of that judgment, the great, most certain, most exact, clear-sighted, omniscient, most just, most free, wherein He regards neither powerful nor rich nor gifts, nor aught but justice? For He is the God of the judgment, to Whom it belongs by nature to judge all men and things by an exact judgment: for His

BEHOLD, *I will send
my messenger, and he

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shall ^bprepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple,

Matt. 11. 10.
Mark 1. 2.
Luke 1. 76.
& 7. 27.
Isai. 40. 3.

nature is equity itself, justice itself, providence itself, and that, most just, most wise.—To Him it belongs to be the Judge of all, and to exercise strict judgment upon all; and He will exercise it fully on that decisive and last day of the world, which shall be the horizon between this life and the next, parting off time from eternity, heaven from hell, the blessed from the damned forever, through Christ, Whom He constituted Judge of all, quick and dead.”

III. 1. God answers their complaints of the absence of His judgments, that they would come, but would include those also who clamored for them. For no one who knew his own sinfulness would call for the judgment of God, as being himself, *chief of sinners.* S. Augustine pictures one saying to God, “Take away the ungodly man,” and that God answers, “Which?”

Behold, I send My messenger before My face, and he shall prepare My way before Me. They, then, were not prepared for His Coming, for Whom they clamored. The messenger is the same whom Isaiah had foretold, whose words Malachi uses ^c; *“The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high-way for our God.”* ^dThou, child, was the prophecy on S. John Baptist’s birth, *shall be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His way, to give knowledge of salvation unto His people, for the remission of their sins.* Repentance was to be the preparation for the kingdom of Christ, the Messiah, for Whom they looked so impatiently.

He Who speaks, is He Who should come, God the Son. For it was before Him Who came and dwelt among us, that the way was to be prepared. He speaks here in His Divine Nature, as the Lord Who should send, and Who should Himself come in our flesh. In the Gospel, when He was come in the flesh, He speaks not of His own Person but of the Father, since ^e“indivisible are the operations of the Trinity, and what the One doth, the other Two do, since the Three are of one nature, power and operation.” Whence Christ, in order to give no excuse to the Jews to speak against Him before the time, refers

^a Is. i. 14.

^b Ib. xliii. 24.

^c Eph. iv. 30.

^d S. Jer.

^e Lap.

^f פנה לך had been used only by Isaiah, xl. 3,

lvii. 14, lxii. 10, although פנה לפניך abs., had been used Ps. lxxx. 10.

^g Is. xl. 3.

^h S. Luke i. 76.

ⁱ Lap.

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* Isai. 63. 9.

* even the messenger of the
covenant, whom ye delight

it, as He does His life¹, His doctrine², words³ and works⁴ to the Father.

"Those works, which do not relate to that which belongs peculiarly to each Person, being common, are ascribed now to One Person, now to Another, in order to set forth the One Substance in the Trinity of Persons." Thus, S. John says⁵, Isaiah spoke of the unbelief of the Jews, when he saw the glory of God the Son and spoke of Him, and S. Paul says⁶ that the Holy Ghost spoke then by him.

And he shall prepare the way before Me.
"The same is God's way here, and Christ's there, an evident proof that Christ is one God with the Father, and that, in Christ, God came and was manifest in the flesh." The prophets and all who turned men to righteousness, or who retained the knowledge of the truth or of righteousness or of God in the world, did, in their degree, prepare the way for Christ. But John was His immediate forerunner before His Face, the herald of His immediate approach; whence he is called "the end of the law, and the beginning of the Gospel," "the lamp before the Light, the voice before the Word, the mediator between the Old and the New Testament;" "the link of the law and of grace; a new morning star; a ray, before the true Sun should burst forth," the end of night, the beginning of day.

And the Lord, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple. He, Whose Coming they sought for, was Almighty God, the God of Judgment¹². He Who should come, was the

¹ S. John vi. 57.

² Ib. vii. 16.

³ Ib. iii. 11, v. 43, viii. 38, 40, 47, 55, xii. 49, xiv. 10, 24.

⁴ Ib. iv. 34, v. 19, 20, 26, 30, 36, vi. 38, viii. 28, ix. 4, x. 25, 32, 37, 38, xiv. 10, 11.

⁵ Rib. ⁶ S. John xii. 41.

⁷ Acts xxviii. 25.

⁸ Poc.

⁹ S. Thom. 3 p. q. 38. art. 1. ad 2. See Tert. in Marc. iv. 33. pp. 317, 318. Edinb. Tr.

¹⁰ S. Greg. Naz. Orat. 21. n. 3 p. 387 Ben.

¹¹ S. Chrysost. Serm. 21. Bibl. Patr. vii. 917.

¹² Rashi, "The God of judgment." Ibn Ezra says: "This is the glory; this is the messenger of the covenant; for the sense is doubled." Abarbanel, "Haadon is the Name which is glorified, who will then come to His temple, the house of His sanctuary, and His glorious name and His Shechinah shall dwell there; and this is what they sought in their murmurings." In the "Mashmia yeshu'ah,"

"he says, 'Haadon may be explained of the king Messiah.' Kimchi also gives it as his first explanation: 'Haadon, he is the king Messiah, and he is the angel of the covenant;' but he gives an alternative explanation, 'or he calls Elijah the messenger of the covenant.' Saadiah Gaon admits the 'Me' before whom the messenger is sent, to be the Messiah b. David. 'The forerunner of the Messiah b. David will be like his ambassador, and as one who prepareth the people, and clearth the way, as in what is said, Behold I send &c.' Sepher Haemunoth Tr. # do redemption, (quoted by Volsin on the P. F. f. 127.)

in: behold, he shall come,
saith the LORD of hosts.

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* Hag. 2. 7.

Lord, again Almighty God, since, in usage too, none else is called "the Lord¹³," as none else can be. The temple also, to which He was to come, the temple of God, is His own. The messenger, or the Angel of the covenant, plainly, even from the parallelism, is the same as the Lord. It was one, for whom they looked; one, of whose absence they complained; "where is the God of judgment?" one, who should come to His temple¹⁵; one, whose coming they sought and prepared to have pleasure in¹⁶; one, of whom it is repeated, lo, He cometh¹⁷; one, in the day of whose coming, at whose appearing, it was asked, who shall stand? "All Christian interpreters are agreed that this Lord is Christ, Whom God hath made both Lord and Christ, and Who is Lord over all; by Whom all things were made, are sustained and governed; Who is (as the root of the word²¹ imports) the basis and foundation, not of any private family, tribe or kingdom, but of all; by Whom are all things and we by Him; and Whose we are also by right of redemption; and so He is Lord of lords and King of kings, deservedly called the Lord." As then the special presence of God was often indicated in connection with the Angel of the Lord, so, here, He Who was to come was entitled the Angel or messenger of the covenant, as God also calls Him the covenant itself, I will give Thee for a covenant of the people, a light of the Gentiles. He it was, the Angel of His Presence, Who saved His former people, in Whom His Name was, and Who,

The author of the older Nizzachon (whether seriously or to have something to say) said, "He is sent and is not God." Wagensell p. 126. Tanchum says, "they are promised a time, in which transgressors will be requited with a swift retribution by the just king whom God will raise up to the rule, and he is the king Messiah."

The Jews are agreed also that the messenger is no ordinary person. Ibn Ezra supposes him to be the Messiah b. Joseph, holding accordingly that he, before whose face he should come, was the Messiah ben David: Kimchi, that it was an angel from heaven (as in Ex. xxiii. 20.) to guard them in the way. But to guard in the way is not to prepare the way before him; Rashi and the author of the Abkath rochel, "the angel of death who should clear away the wicked;" Abarbanel, that it was Malachi himself; but he who is promised through Malachi, was yet to come.

¹³ דאדון Ex. xxiii. 17, xxxiv. 23, Is. i. 24, iii. 1, x. 16, 33, xxix. 4. [all, beside this place.]

¹⁴ II. 17.

¹⁵ יבוא אל היכלו, iii. 1.

¹⁶ חנה נא, Ib. מנקהים, Poc.

¹⁷ Acts ii. 36. ²⁰ Ib. x. 36.

²¹ Poc., (as Abulwalid, Menahem, Parehon, Kimchi) derives דאדון from אדון.

²² I Cor. vii. 6.

²³ Rev. xvii. 14, xix. 16.

²⁴ Is. xlii. 6.

²⁵ Ib. lxiii. 9.

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2 But who may abide
the day of his coming?
and 'who shall stand when

* ch. 4. 1.
* Rev. 6. 17.

by the prerogative of God, would ¹not pardon their transgressions. He should be ²the Mediator of the new and better covenant which is promised; ³not according to the covenant, that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, which My covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord; but this shall be the covenant, that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be My people.

Whom ye seek, are seeking, Whom ye delight in, i. e. profess so to do; He will come, but will be very different from Him whom ye look for, an Avenger on your enemies. Judgment will come, but it will begin with yourselves.

Shall suddenly come, ⁴"unawares, when men should not think of them; whence perhaps it is that the Jews reckon the Messiah among what shall come unawares⁵. As, it is here said of His first Coming, so it is said of His second Coming (which may be comprehended under this here spoken of) that except they diligently watch for it, ⁶"it shall come upon them unawares, ⁷suddenly, ⁸"in such an hour as they think not. ⁹"The Lord of glory always comes, like a thief in the night, to those who sleep in their sins."

Lo, He will come: he insists again and calls their minds to that Coming, certain, swift, new, wonderful, on which all eyes should be set, but His Coming would be a sifting-time.

2. And who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? The implied answer is, "No one;" as in the Psalm, ¹⁰"If Thou, Lord, wilt mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Joel had asked the same, ¹¹"The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" ¹²"How can the weakness of man endure such might; his blindness, such light; his frailty, such power; his uncleanness, such holiness; the chaff, such a fire? For He is like a refiner's fire. Who would not fail through stupefaction, fear, horror, shrinking reverence, from such majesty?"

¹ Ex. xliii. 21.

² Heb. xii. 24, viii. 6.

³ Jer. xxxi. 32, 33, Heb. viii. 9.

⁴ Poc.

⁵ "Buxt. Lex. Ch. et Talm. v. נִסְתָּר" Poc.

⁶ S. Luke xxi. 35.

⁷ S. Mark xiii. 36.

⁸ S. Matt. xxiv. 44.

⁹ Schmiedler.

¹⁰ Ps. cxxx. 3.

¹¹ Jo. ii. 11, יִכְלִי וְיִסַּח; Jer. x. 10, "The nations shall not abide (יִכְלִי) His indignation." Vulg. has,

he appeareth? for ^ahe is
like a refiner's fire, and
like fullers' soap:

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* See Is. 4. 4.
Matt. 3. 10, 11, 12.

Malachi seems to blend, as Joel, the first and second coming of our Lord. The first Coming too was a time of sifting and severance, according as those, to whom He came, did or did not receive Him. The severance was not final, because there was yet space for repentance; but it was real, an earnest of the final judgment. ¹³For judgment, our Lord says, I am come into this world, that they which see not may see, and they which see might be made blind; and again, ¹⁴Now is the judgment of this world; and, ¹⁵He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the Only-Begotten Son of God; ¹⁶He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. As, on the other hand, He saith, ¹⁷whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life; and ¹⁸he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; "hath," He saith; not, "shall have;" hath it, in present reality and earnest, though he may forfeit it: so the other class is condemned already, although the one may repent and be saved, the other may ¹⁹turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity; and if he persevere in it, shall die therein. It is then one ever-present judgment. Every soul of man is in a state of grace or out of it; in God's favor or under His wrath; and the judgment of the Great Day, in which the secrets of men's hearts shall be revealed, will be but an outward manifestation of that now hidden judgment. But the words, in their fullest sense, imply a passing of that judgment, in which men do or do not stand, as in those of our Lord, ²⁰As a snare shall that day come on all those that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man; and S. Paul, ²¹Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand; and in the Revelation, ²²They said to the mountains and rocks; Fall on us, and hide us from the wrath of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall

cogitare, i. e. who shall comprehend? But כִּלְכֵּל, in this sense, is used of actual containing, the heaven of heavens cannot contain the Infinite God, (1 Kgs vii. 27, 2 Chr. ii. 5, [6 Eng.] vi. 18,) not of intellectually comprehending.

¹³ Lap.

¹⁴ S. John ix. 39.

¹⁵ Jb. xii. 31.

¹⁶ Jb. iii. 18.

¹⁷ Jb. 36.

¹⁸ Jb. vi. 54.

¹⁹ Jb. 47.

²⁰ Ezek. xxxiii. 18.

²¹ S. Luke xxi. 35, 36.

²² Eph. vi. 13.

²³ Rev. vi. 16, 17.

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3 And ^ahe shall sit as
a refiner and purifier of
silver: and he shall purify
the sons of Levi, and

^bIsai. 1. 25.
Zech. 13. 9.

be able to stand? Asaph says of a temporal, yet, for this life, final destruction; *'At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse eye cast into a deep sleep. Thou art to be feared, and who may stand in Thy sight, when Thou art angry?'*

For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. Two sorts of materials for cleansing are mentioned, the one severe, where the baser materials are inworked with the rich ore; the other mild, where the defilement is easily separable. ^a"He shall come like a refining fire; ^aa fire shall burn before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. Then He shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, that He may judge His people; streams of fire shall sweep before, bearing away all sinners. For the Lord is called a fire, and a ^aconsuming fire, so as to burn our ^bwood, hay, stubble. And not fire only, but fuller's soap^c. To those who sin heavily, He is a refining and consuming fire, but to those who commit light sins, fuller's soap, to restore cleanness to it, when washed." Yet, though light in comparison, this too had its severity; for clothes which were washed (of which the word is used) were trampled ^don by the feet. ^e"The nitrum and the fuller's soap is penitence." Yet the whiteness and purity so restored, is, at the last, perfected. Inspiration could find no more adequate comparison for us, for the brightness of our Lord's raiment from the glory of the Transfiguration, than, ^fexceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

Our Lord is, in many ways, as a fire. He says of Himself; ^g"I am come to send a fire upon earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled? S. John Baptist said of Him, ^h"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." He kindles in the heart "a fire of love," which softens what is hard, will

¹ Ps. lxxvi. 6, 7.

² S. Jer.

³ Ps. 1. 3, 4.

⁴ Deut. iv. 24.

⁵ 1 Cor. iii. 12.

⁶ בָּרִית is a generic name for materials for cleansing; but various plants, possessing alkaline qualities, grew and grow in Palestine, and "kali" is still an article of trade. Being united with בָּרִית Jer. ii. 22, it has been supposed the "borth" is a vegetable, as contrasted with בָּרִית, a mineral. ⁷For the verb *Borth*, the LXX. have translated *soar*, to signify the herb of fullers, which according to the west of Palestine grows in luxuriant moist places, and has the same virtue for cleansing defilement as nitrum." S. Jer. on Jer. c. ii. 21.

⁸ כֶּסֶס, (only used in Piel, except in the part. of the obsolete Kal. Comp., with Ges. כֶּסֶס and בֶּסֶס. S. Jer. ib. ⁹S. Mark ix. 3. ¹⁰S. Luke xii. 49.

¹¹ Ib. iii. 16.

¹² Transl. of Whitsun-hymn, Veni Sancte Spiritus,

purge them as gold and silver, that they may ^{Before} ^{CHRIST} ^{cir. 397.} ¹of-fer unto the LORD an of-fering in righteousness. ¹ Pet. 2. 5.

¹² Wash whate'er of stain is here,
Sprinkle what is dry or sere,
Heal and bind the wounded sprite;
Bend whate'er is stubborn still,
Kindle what is cold and chill,
What hath wandered guide aright."

But as God is a consuming fire, Who must burn out the dross, unless we be ¹³reprobate silver which the founder melteth in vain, either He must, by His grace, consume the sin within us, or must consume us with it, in hell.

3. And He shall sit ¹⁴, as a King and Judge on His throne, with authority, yet also to try accurately the cause of each, separating seeming virtues from real graces; hypocrites, more or less consciously, from His true servants.

He shall purify ¹⁵ the sons of Levi. These had been first the leaders in degeneracy, the corruptors of the people by their example and connivance. Actually ¹⁶ a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Barnabas also was a Levite ¹⁷. But more largely, as Zion and Jerusalem are the titles for the Christian Church, and Israel who believed was the true Israel, so the sons of Levi are the true Levites, the Apostles and their successors in the Christian priesthood.

It was through three centuries of persecutions that the Church was purified by fire.

That they may offer, lit. and they shall be unto the Lord offerers of a meal-offering in righteousness, i. e. they shall be such, and that, habitually, abidingly. Again, here and in the next words, and the meal-offering of Judah shall be pleasant unto the Lord, it is remarkable, that the meal-offering, to which the Holy Eucharist corresponds, is alone mentioned. Of bloody offerings Malachi is silent; for they were to cease.

in Hymns for the Week and the Seasons p. 105. 1848.

¹³ Jer. vi. 20, 30.

¹⁴ The usual word for sitting on a throne, Ex. xii. 29, Deut. xviii. 13, 1 Kgs i. 13, 17, 48, 48, ii. 12, 24, iii. 6, viii. 20, 25, xvi. 11, xxii. 10, 2 Kgs x. 30, xi. 19, xiii. 13, xv. 12, Ps. cxxxii. 12, Pr. xx. 8, 18, xvi. 5, Jer. xiii. 13, xvii. 25, xlii. 4, 34, xxxiii. 17, xxxvi. 30, Zech. vi. 13; or for judgment, Ex. xviii. 13, Jud. v. 10, Ps. cxxii. 5, 18, xxviii. 6, Jer. xxix. 16, Dan. vii. 9, 26, Jo. iii. 12. Of God, Ps. ii. 4, ix. 5, 8, xxix. 10, xlvii. 8, lv. 20, 1 Kgs xxii. 19, 18, vi. 1, and others.

¹⁵ קָקִי, probably originally "strained," used of wine, 18, xxvi. 6, but thence perhaps, the first meaning being lost, of precious metals: gold, Job xxviii. 1, 1 Chr. xxviii. 18, silver, Ps. xli. 7, 1 Chr. xlix. 4.

¹⁶ Acts vi. 7.

¹⁷ Ib. iv. 36.

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4 Then ^ashall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as ^bin former years.

* ch. 1. 11.

Or, ancient.

In righteousness, as Zacharias prophesied, that we might serve Him in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

4. Then [And] shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem. The law, the new revelation of God, was to go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Judah and Jerusalem then are here the Christian Church. They shall be pleasant [lit. sweet] unto the Lord. It is a reversal [using the self-same word] of what God had said of them in the time of their religious decay, ^cthey shall not offer wine-offerings to the Lord, neither shall they be sweet unto Him; ^dyour burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto Me.

As in the days of old, before the days of degeneracy; as it stands in the ancient Liturgies, "Vouchsafe to look upon them [the consecrated oblations] with a propitious and serene Countenance, and to accept them, as Thou vouchsafedst to accept the gifts of Thy righteous Abel and the sacrifice of our Patriarch Abraham, and the holy sacrifice, the immaculate offering, which Thy high priest Melchisedec offered unto Thee." ^eThe oblation of the sacrament of the Eucharist, made by the Jews who should believe in Christ, which is known to have been first instituted by Christ in the city of Jerusalem, and afterward to have been continued by His disciples, shall be pleasing unto the Lord, as the sacrifices of the Patriarchs, Melchisedec, Abraham, and the holy priests in the law, as Aaron; yea, the truth takes precedence of the figure and shadow; the sacrifice of the new law is more excellent

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5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, ^fand ^gagainst false swearers, and

^hZech. 5. 4.
Jam. 5. 4, 12

and acceptable to God, than all the sacrifices of the law or before the law. With this agrees what the Lord saith to the synagogue, ⁱI will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin; and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors, as at the beginning: and the destruction of the transgressors, and of the sinners, shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." So now it follows;

5. And I will come near to you to judgment. They had clamored for the coming of the God of judgment; God assures them that He will come to judgment, which they had desired, but far other than they look for. The few would be purified; the great mass of them (so that He calls them you), the main body of those who had so clamored, would find that He came as a Judge, not for them but against them.

And I will be a swift witness. ^j"In judging I will bear witness, and witnessing, I, the Same, will bring forth judgment, saith the Lord; therefore the judgment shall be terrible, since the judge is an infallible witness, whom the conscience of no one will be able to contradict."

God would be a swift witness, as He had said before, ^kHe shall come suddenly. Our Lord calls Himself ^lthe Faithful and True witness, when He stands in the midst of the Church, as their Judge. God's judgments are always unexpected by those, on whom they fall. The sins are those specially condemned by the law; the use of magical arts as drawing men away from God, the rest as sins of special malignity. Magical arts were rife at the time of the Coming of our Lord; and

hand of Thine Apostle, so, in Thy goodness, receive also from us sinners the gifts which lie before Thee, and grant that our oblation may be acceptable, hallowed in the Holy Spirit, &c." lb. p. 29, 30.

^mDion. ⁿS. Matt. xxvi. [29] Acts ii. 42, 46.

^o1s. i. 25, 26, 28.

^pRev. iii. 14, i. 5, "I, and not other witnesses, having seen with My own eyes." Theod. S. Jer.

^qSee Introduction to Zechariah pp. 330, 331, and on Zech. xlii. 2. p. 442. Lightfoot, on S. Matt. xxiv. 24, quotes Maimonides, alleging that one "elected in the Sanhedrin ought to be learned in the arts of astrologers, diviners, soothsayers &c. that he might be able to judge those guilty thereof." Sanhedrin c. 2. He mentions the belief that many had perished thereby (Hieros. Sanhedr. f. 18, 3). 80 women hung in one day for it at Ascalon, (lb. f. 23, 3. Babyl. Sanh. f. 44, 2.) for that "the Jewish women had greatly broken out into such practices." Gloss lb.

¹Is. ii. 3.

²Hos. ix. 4.

³Jer. vi. 20.

⁴Canon Missae. So in S. James' Liturgy, in the prayer of the incense, "O God, Who didst receive the gift of Abel, and the sacrifice of Noah and Abraham, the incense of Aaron and Zachariah." Ass. Cod. Lit. T. v. p. 5. "Receive from the hand of us sinners this incense, as Thou didst receive the oblation of Abel and Noah and Aaron and all Thy saints." lb. p. 6. "Grant us, Lord, with fear and a pure conscience to present to Thee this spiritual and unbloody sacrifice, which, when Thou hast received on Thy holy supercelestial and spiritual altar, as a sweet savor, do Thou send back to us the grace of Thine All-holy Spirit, and look upon us, O God, and regard thy our reasonable service, and accept it, as Thou didst accept the gifts of Abel, the sacrifice of Noah, the priesthoods of Moses and Aaron, the peace-offerings of Samuel, the repentance of David, the incense of Zachary. As Thou didst receive this true worship from the

Before
CHRIST
cir. 397. against those that || oppress
the hireling in *his* wages,
| Or, defraud. the widow, and the father-
less, and that turn aside

Before
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cir. 397. the stranger from *his* right,
and fear not me, saith the
LORD of hosts.

6 For I am the LORD,

adultery, as shewn in the history of the woman taken in adultery, when her accusers were convicted in their own consciences¹.

Oppress the hireling, lit. *oppress the hire*,² i.e. deal oppressively in it. Behold, says S. James³, *the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is by you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth*. The mere delay in the payment of the wages of the laborer brought sin unto him, against whom he cried to God⁴. It is no light sin, since it is united with the heaviest, and is spoken of as reaching the ears of God. The widow and the fatherless stand in a relation of special nearness to God.

And fear not Me. He closes with the central defect, which was the mainspring of all their sins, the absence of the fear of God. The commission of any of these sins, rife as they unhappily are, proves that those who did them had no fear of God. ⁵ Nothing hinders that this should be referred to the first Coming of Christ. For Christ, in preaching to the Jews, exercised upon them a judgment of just rebuke, especially of the priests, Scribes and Pharisees, as the Gospels shew.

6. *I am the Lord, I change not*, better, more concisely, *I, the Lord⁶, change not*. The proper name of God, *He Who Is*, involves His Unchangeableness. For change implies imperfection; it changes to that which is either more perfect or less perfect: to somewhat which that being, who changes, is not or has not. But God has everything in Himself perfectly. ⁷ Thou Alone, O Lord, Art what Thou Art, and Thou Art Who Art. For what is one thing in the whole and another in parts, and wherein is anything subject to change, is not altogether what Is. And what beginneth from not being, and can be conceived, as not being, and only subsisteth

through another thing, returns to not-being; and what hath a 'has been,' which now is not, and a 'to be,' which as yet is not, that is not, properly and absolutely. But Thou Art what Thou Art. For whatever Thou Art in any time or way, that Thou Art wholly and always; and Thou Art, Who Art properly and simply, because Thou hast neither 'to have been,' or 'to be about to be,' but only to be present; and canst not be conceived, ever not to have been." ⁸ There is only one simple Good, and therefore One Alone Unchangeable, which is God.

Our life is a "becoming" rather than a simple "being;" it is a continual losing of what we had, and gaining what we had not; for ⁹ in as far as any one is not what he was, and is what he was not, so far forth he dieth and ariseth;" dieth to what he was, ariseth to be something otherwise.

¹⁰ Increase evidences a beginning; decrease, death and destruction. And therefore Malachi says, *I am God, and I change not*, ever retaining His own state of being; because what has no origin cannot be changed."

So the Psalmist says, ¹¹ *As a vesture, Thou shalt change them and they shall be changed, but Thou art the Same, and Thy years shall not fail; and Balaam, controlled by God, ¹² God is not a man, that He should lie, or the son of man, that He should repent; and, ¹³ with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

Of this unchangeableness of God, His holy ones partake, as far as they fix themselves on God. ¹⁴ "The soul of man hangs upon Him, by Whom it was made. And because it was made, to desire God Alone, but everything which it desires below is less than He, rightly doth not that suffice it, which is not God. Hence is it, that the soul is scattered hither and thither, and is repelled from everything, toward which it is borne, through satiety of them. But holy men guard themselves by

¹ S. John viii. 9, *adulterous generation*. S. Matt. xii. 39. Lightfoot on S. John viii. 3 quotes Sotah f. 47. 1. "From the time that homicides were multiplied, the beheading of the heifer ceased: from the time that adulterers were multiplied, the bitter waters ceased:" and Maimonides on Sotah, c. 3, "When the adulterers multiplied under the 2d Temple, the Sanhedrin abolished the ordeal of the adulteresses by the bitter water; relying on its being written, 'I will not visit your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery.'" Lightfoot subjoins, "The Gemarists teach that Johanan b. Zaccai was the author of that advice, who was still alive, in the Sanhedrin, and perhaps among those who brought the adulteress before Christ. For some things make it probable, that the *Scribes and Pharisees*, mentioned here, were elders of the Synagogue."

S. Justin reproaches them with having fresh wives, wherever they went throughout the world. Dial. fn. p. 243. Oxf. Tr.

עשן שר שר, as in Mi. ii. 2, עשן ובר.

¹⁵ I oppress a man and his house.

¹⁶ S. Jas. v. 4. ¹⁷ Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. ¹⁸ Dion. ¹⁹ The Lord is in opposition to I, as, in the following clause, the sons of Jacob to ye. The two clauses correspond in form.

²⁰ I, (יְהוָה) the Lord, change not; Ye, (בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב) sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

²¹ S. Anselm Prosl. c. 22. p. 34 Ben.

²² S. Aug. de Civ. Dei xi. 10.

²³ S. Aug. Conf. xi. 7. p. 291. Oxf. Tr.

²⁴ Novatian de Trin. c. 4.

²⁵ Nu. xxiii. 19.

²⁶ S. Greg. Mor. xxvi. 44. n. 79. Ben.

²⁷ Ps. cii. 27.

²⁸ S. Jas. i. 17.

Before
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cir. 397. "I change not; "therefore

Num. 23. 19.
Rom. 11. 29.
Jam. 1. 17.
Lam. 3. 22.
Acts 7. 51.

Zech. 1. 3.

ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

7 ¶ Even from the days of "your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of

hosts. "But ye said, Before
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cir. 397. Wherein shall we return?

8 ¶ Will a man rob "ch. 1. a. God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? "In "Neh. 13. 10, 12. tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

cautious observation, lest they should be relaxed from their intentness by change, and because they desire to be the same, wisely bind themselves to the thought, whereby they love God. For in the contemplation of the Creator, they will receive this, that they should ever enjoy one stability of mind. No changeableness then dissipates them, because their thought ever perseveres, free from unlikeness to itself. This therefore they now imitate, striving with effort, which hereafter they shall with joy receive as a gift. To which unchangeableness the prophet had bound himself by the power of love, when he said, ¹ *One thing I required of the Lord, which I will require, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord.* To this unity Paul clave intently, when he said, ² *One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and stretching forth to those things which are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*³

And ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Man would often have become weary of man's wickedness and waywardness. We are impatient at one another, readily despair of one another. God might justly have cast off them and us; but He changes not. He abides by the covenant which He made with their fathers; He consumed them not; but with His own unchangeable love awaited their repentance. Our hope is not in ourselves, but in God.

7. Even from the days of your fathers. Back to those days and from them³, ye are gone away from My ordinances. "I am not changed from good; ye are not changed from evil. I am unchangeable in holiness; ye are unchangeable in perversity."

Return unto Me. The beginning of our return is from the preventing grace of God. ⁵ Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God, is the voice of the soul to God, preparing for His grace; ⁶ turn

us, O God of our salvation. For, not in its own strength, but by His grace can the soul turn to God. Turn thou to Me and I will return unto you, is the Voice of God, acknowledging our free-will, and promising His favor, if we accept His grace in return.

And ye say, Wherein shall we return? Strange ignorance of the blinded soul, unconscious that God has aught against it! It is the Pharisaic spirit in the Gospel. It would own itself doubtless in general terms a sinner, but when called on, wholly to turn to God, as being wholly turned from Him, it asks, "In what? What would God have of me?" as if ready to do it.

8. Shall a man rob or cheat, defraud God? God answers question by question, but thereby drives it home to the sinner's soul, and appeals to his conscience. The conscience is steeled, and answers again, In what? God specifies two things only, obvious, patent, which, as being material things, they could not deny. In tithes and offerings. The offerings included several classes of dues to God, a) the first fruits⁷; b) the annual half-shekel⁸; c) the offerings made for the tabernacle⁹, and the second temple¹⁰ at its first erection; it is used of ordinary offerings¹¹; d) of the tithes of their own tithes, which the Levites paid to the priests¹²; e) of the portions of the sacrifice which accrued to the priests¹³.

9. Ye have been cursed with the curse (not "with a curse"). The curse threatened had come upon them: but, as fore-supposed in Leviticus by the repeated burthen, If ye still walk contrary to Me, they had persevered in evil. God had already shewn His displeasure. But they, so far from being amended by it, were the more hardened in their sin. Perhaps as men do, they pleaded their punishment, as a reason why they should not amend. They defrauded God, under false pretences. They were impoverished by His curse, and

¹ Ps. xxvii. 4. ² Phil. iii. 13, 14. למימי.

³ Rup.

⁴ Jer. xxxi. 18. Lam. v. 21.

⁵ Ps. lxxxv. 4.

⁶ Ex. xxx. 13-15.

⁷ תרומה Num. xv. 19, 20.

⁸ Ib. xxv. 2, 3, xxxv. 5, 21, 24, xxxvi. 3, 6.

⁹ Ex. viii. 25.

¹⁰ 2 Chr. xxxi. 10, 12 (where והקעשר התרומה are joined, as here, but in inverse order.)

¹¹ Nu. xviii. 26, 28, 29.

¹² Lev. vii. 14.

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*Prov. 3. 9, 10.
†Chr. 26. 20.
‡Chr. 31. 11.
Neh. 10. 38.
‡13. 12.

10 *Bring ye all the
tithes into 'the storehouse,
that there may be meat in
mine house, and prove me

so they could not afford to pay the tithes; as men say, "the times are bad; so we cannot help the poor" of Christ. *And Me ye still are defrauding*¹; *Me, ye; man, God.* And that not one or other, but *this whole people.* It was a requital as to that, in which they had offended. "2 Because ye have not rendered tithes and first-fruits, therefore ye are cursed in famine and penury." "2 Because the people did not render tithes and first-fruits to the Levites, the Lord saith, that He Himself suffered fraud, Whose ministers, constrained by hunger and penury, deserted the temple. For, if He is visited by others in prison, and sick, is received and cared for, and, hungry and athirst, receives food and drink, why should He not receive tithes in His ministers, and, if they are not given, be Himself deprived of His portion?"

10. *Bring the whole tithes*, not a part only, keeping back more or less, and, as he had said, *defrauding* God, offering, like Ananias, a part, as if it had been the whole; *into the treasury*, where they were collected in the time of Hezekiah³, and again, at this time, by the direction of Nehemiah, *so that there shall be food*⁴, not superfluity, in *My house*, "6 for those who minister in the house of My sanctuary." "6 *The Levites and singers had*, before the reformation, *fled every one to his field*, because the portion of the Levites had not been given them. On Nehemiah's remonstrance, aided by Malachi, *the tithe of corn and the wine and the new oil were brought into the treasures.*

Bring the whole tithes. "1 Thou knowest that all things which come to thee are God's, and dost not thou give of His own to the Creator of all? The Lord God needeth not: He asketh not a reward, but reverence: He asketh not anything of thine, to restore to Him. He asketh of thee *first-fruits and tithes*. Niggard, what wouldest thou do, if He took nine parts to Himself, and left thee the tenth?—What if He said to thee; 'Man,

קָבָעִים. According to its probable etym.

("withdrew and so hid," Arab.), it might be defrauding rather than open robbery. But it has not this metaph. meaning in Arabic. Abulw. Tanchum, Hunt. 206, render it of open violence קָבָעִים

occurs, beside, in Hebrew only in Pr. xxii. 23, *The Lord will plead their cause and will spoil those who spoil them*, i. e. He will requite them as they have done; in the same bold language, as in Ps. xviii. 17. "S. Jer.

"2 Chr. xxxi. 11. sqq. Neh. x. 38, 32, xii. 44. xlii. 12. "4 קָבָעִים, food, as Pr. xxxi. 15, Ps. cxi. 5.

now herewith, saith the
LORD of hosts, if I will
not open you the "windows
of heaven, and † pour

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*Gen. 7. 11.
2 Kib. 7. 2.
†Heb. empty
out.
*2 Chr. 31. 10.

thou art Mine, Who made thee; Mine is the land which thou tillest; Mine are the seeds, which thou sowest; Mine are the animals, which thou weariest; Mine are the showers, Mine the winds, Mine the sun's heat; and since Mine are all the elements, whereby thou livest, thou who givest only the labor of thine hands, deservest only the tithes.' But since Almighty God lovingly feeds us, He gives most ample reward to us who labor little: claiming to Himself the tithes only, He has condoned us all the rest."

And prove Me now herewith, in or by this thing. God pledges Himself to His creatures, in a way in which they themselves can verify. "If you will obey, I will supply all your needs; if not, I will continue your dearth." By whatever laws God orders the material creation, He gave them a test, of the completion of which they themselves could judge, of which they themselves must have judged. They had been afflicted with years of want. God promises them years of plenty, on a condition which He names. What would men think now, if any one had, in God's name, promised that such or such a disease, which injured our crops or our cattle, should come at once to an end, if any one of God's laws should be kept? We should have been held as fanatics, and rightly; for we had no commission of God. God authenticates those by whom He speaks; He promises, Who alone can perform.

"There be three keys which God hath reserved in His own hands, and hath not delivered to any to minister or substitute, the keys of life, of rain, and of the resurrection. In the ordering of the rain they look on His great power, no less than in giving life at first, or afterward raising the dead to it; as S. Paul saith, "God left not Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave rain from heaven and fruitful seasons."

If I will not open the windows of heaven¹⁰. In the time of the flood, they were, as it were,

⁵ Jon.

⁶ Neh. xlii. 10-23.

⁷ App. Serm. S. Aug. 277. Opp. v. App. p. 461. "Not S. Augustine's; more like Caesarius than S. Aug." Ben.

⁸ Poc. quoting Sanhedr. c. Chelek, and Taanith c. 1.

⁹ Acts xiv. 17.

¹⁰ The exact expression occurs only in the history of the flood, Gen. vii. 11, viii. 2; in the scoffing courtier's speech, ironically, of God "making windows in heaven" (בְּשָׁמַיִם), 2 Kgs vii. 2. and, perhaps in reference to the flood, Isaiah says, "windows from on high are opened, and the foundations of the earth do shake." Is. xlii. 18.

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you out a blessing, that
*there shall not be room
enough to receive it.*

11 And I will rebuke
* Amos 4. 9. ' the devourer for your
sakes, and he shall not
† Heb. corrupt. † destroy the fruits of your
ground; neither shall your
vine cast her fruit before

opened, to man's destruction: now, God would
rain abundantly for you, for their sakes. *And
pour you out, lit. empty out to you, give to them
fully, holding back nothing.* So in the Gos-
pel it is said, that the love of God is *shed
abroad¹*, poured out and forth in our hearts by
the Holy Ghost which is given to us.

That there be not room enough to receive it;
lit. until there be no sufficiency². The text does
not express what should not suffice, whether
it be on God's part or on man's. Yet it were
too great irony, if understood of God. His
superabundance, above all which we can ask or
think, is a first principle in the conception of
God, as the Infinite Source of all being. But
to say of God, that He would pour out His
blessing, until man could not contain it, is
one bliss of eternity, that God's gifts will
overflow the capacity of His creatures to re-
ceive them. The pot of oil poured forth the
oil, until, on the prophet's saying, *Bring me
yet a vessel*, the widow's son said, *There is not
a vessel more.* And the oil stayed. God's gifts
are limited only by our capacity to receive
them.

11. And I will rebuke the devourer, the locust,
caterpillar, or any like scourge of God. It
might be, that when the rain watered the
field, the locust or caterpillar &c. might de-
stroy the corn, so that the labors of man
should perish; wherefore he adds, *I will re-
buke the devourer.* Neither shall your vine cast
her fruit⁴ before the time, holding out a fair
promise, but cut off by the frost-wind or the
hail; the blossoms or the unripe fruit strew-
ing the earth, as a token of God's dis-
pleasure.

12. All nations shall call you blessed. The
promise goes beyond the temporal prosperity
of their immediate obedience. Few could

the time in the field, saith
the LORD of hosts. Before
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12 And all nations shall
call you blessed: for ye
shall be 'a delightful' Dan. 8. 9.
land, saith the LORD of
hosts.

13 ¶ * Your words have * ch. 2. 17.
been stout against me,

know or think much of the restored proli-
caciousness of Judaea; none could know of its
antecedents. A people, as well as individuals,
may starve, and none know of it. Had the
whole population of Judah died out, their
Persian masters would not have cared for it,
but would have sent fresh colonists to replace
them and pay the tribute to the great king.
The only interest, which all nations could have
in them, was as being the people of God, from
whom He should come, the *Desire of all na-
tions*, in Whom all the families of the earth would
be blessed. Of this, God's outward favor was
the earnest; they should have again the
blessings which He had promised to His
people.

And ye shall be called a delightful land, lit.
a land of good pleasure. It was not so much
the land as the people; ye shall be called. The
land stands for the people upon it, in whom
its characteristics lay. The river Jordan was
not so bright as Abana and Parpar: "the
aspect of the shore" is the same, when the
inhabitants are spiritually or morally dead;
only the more beautiful, in contrast with the
lifeless "spirit of man." So Isaiah says,
*The nations shall see thy righteousness, and all
kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a
name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name—
Thou shalt no more be called Forsaken, nor shall
thy land be called Desolate, but thou shalt be called
My-delight-is-in-her, and thy land Married: for
the Lord delighteth in thee and thy land shall be
married.* God and man should delight in
her.

13. Your words have been stout against Me,
probably oppressive to ⁶ Me, as it is said, *the
famine was strong upon the land.* And ye have
said, *What have we spoken among ourselves⁷
against Thee?* Again, the entire unconscious-

¹ ἀκέραια Rom. v. 5.

² In Ps. lxxii. 3 (quoted by Ges. Ros. &c.) "there
shall be abundance of peace עד בלי ירר, lit "until
there be no moon," has a literal meaning, that the
peace should last until the end of our creation,
without saying anything of what lies beyond.

³ 2 Kgs iv. 4.

⁴ שָׁכַר, used elsewhere as to the animal world, is
used of a land, 2 Kgs ii. 19, whence כִּשְׁכֶּלֶת Ib. 21.

of "immaturity." Pliny speaks of "arborum abor-
tus." H. N. xii. 2, 6. Ges. ⁶ Is. lxii. 2-4.

⁷ עוֹקֵן, with ב on the land, Gen. xli. 56, 57; the city,

2 Kgs xxv. 3, Jer. lii. 6; with עַל, of persons, Gen.
xlvii. 20; hand of God was strong upon the pro-
phet, Ez. iii. 14; they were urgent, pressed upon.
Ez. xii. 33.

⁸ The force of Nif. as in iii. 16. Ps. cix. 23, Ezek.
xxxiii. 30. The constr. with עַל as Pih. in Ps. cix.
20, Hos. vii. 13, Jer. xxix. 32.

Before
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cir. 307. saith the LORD. Yet ye
say, What have we spoken
so much against thee?
^b Job 21. 14, 15, 14 ^b Ye have said, It is
& 22. 17. vain to serve God: and
Ps. 73. 13. what profit is it that we
Zeph. 1. 12. have kept [†] his ordinance,
[†] Heb. his and that we have walked
observation.

Before
CHRIST
cir. 307. † mournfully before the
LORD of hosts?
15 And now ^a we call [†] Heb. in black.
the proud happy; yea, ^a Ps. 73. 12.
they that work wickedness ch. 2. 17.
† are set up; yea, they that [†] Heb. are built.
^a tempt God are even de- ^a Ps. 95. 9.
livered.

ness of self-ignorance and self-conceit! They had criticised God, and knew it not. ^a Before, he had said, ² *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, and ye said, Wherein have we wearied Him? When ye said, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord &c.* Now he repeats this more fully. For the people who returned from Babylon seemed to have a knowledge of God, and to observe the law, and to understand their sin, and to offer sacrifices for sin; to pay tithes, to observe the sabbath, and the rest, commanded in the law of God, and seeing all the nations around them abounding in all things, and that they themselves were in penury, hunger and misery, was scandalized and said, 'What does it benefit me, that I worship the One True God, abominate idols, and, pricked with the consciousness of sin, walk mournfully before God?' A topic, which is pursued more largely in the 73d Psalm. Only the Psalmist relates his temptations to God, and God's deliverance of him from them; these adopted them and spake them against God. They claim, for their partial and meagre service, to have fulfilled God's law, taking to themselves God's words of Abraham, *he kept My charge*³.

14. *Ye have said, It is vain to serve the Lord:* ^a as receiving no gain or reward for their service. This is the judgment of the world, whereby worldlings think pious, just, sincere, strict men, vain, i. e. especially when they see them impoverished, despised, oppressed, afflicted, because they know not the true goods of virtue and eternal glory, but measure all things by sight, sense and taste.—Truly, if the righteous had not hope of another and better life, in vain would they afflict themselves, and bear the afflictions of others. For, as the Apostle says, ^b *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* But now, hoping for another blessed

and eternal life for the slight tribulations of this, we are the happiest of all men."

And we have walked mournfully⁶. Again they take in their mouths the words of Psalmists, that they took the garb of mourners, going about mourning before God for their country's afflictions.

15. *And now we call the proud happy [blessed].* This being so, they sum up the case against God. God had declared that all nations should call them blessed⁷, if they would obey. They answer, using His words; *And now we, (they lay stress on the word, ^a we,) pronounce blessed, in fact, those whom God had pronounced cursed: ⁹ Thou hast rebuked the proud, who are cursed.* Their characteristic, among other bad men, is of insolence¹⁰, arrogance, boiling over with self-conceit, and presumptuous toward God. The ground of Babylon's sentence was, ¹¹ *she hath been proud toward the Lord, the Holy One of Israel;* Jethro says of the Egyptians, as a ground of his belief in God, ¹² *for, in the thing that they dealt proudly, He was above them.* It describes the character of the act of Israel, when God bade them *not go up, neither fight, and they would not hear, and went up presumptuously into the battle*¹³; the contumacious act of those, who, appealing to the judgment of God, afterward refused it¹⁴; of Johanan's associates, who accuse Jeremiah of speaking falsely in the name of God¹⁵; they are persons who rise up¹⁶, forge lies against¹⁷, dig pits for¹⁸, deal perversely with¹⁹, hold in, derision²⁰, oppress²¹, the pious. Whether or no, they mean specifically the heathen, those, whom these pronounced blessed, were those who were contemptuous toward God.

Yea, the workers of wickedness, those who habitually work it, whose employment it is, are built up; yea, they have tried God and have escaped. God had promised that, if ²² *they*

¹ S. Jer.

² ii. 17.

³ שְׁמֵרְתָּ Gen. xxvi. 5; add Lev. xviii. 30, xxii. 9, Deut. xi. 1, Jos. xii. 3, 2 Chr. xli. 11, xliii. 6, Zech. iii. 7.

⁴ Lap.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 19.

⁶ הִלְכְּנוּ קְרִינִים. The form ק is one found only here; the phrase in the Ps. is קָרַר הָלַךְ Ps. xxxv.

14, xxxviii. 7, xlii. 10, xliii. 2.

⁷ verse 12.

⁸ מִנְחָנָה emph.

⁹ Ps. cxix. 21.

¹⁰ Pr. xxi. 24.

¹¹ וְיָרָא Jer. 1. 29. It is used in regard to Babylon together with עִרְצִים (as in Ps. lxxxvi. 14.) Is. xlii. 11.

¹² Ex. xviii. 11. It is used of Egypt toward Israel. Neh. ix. 16.

¹³ Deut. i. 41, 43.

¹⁴ Jer. xliii. 2.

¹⁵ Ps. lxxxvi. 14.

¹⁶ Ib. 85.

¹⁷ Ib. 122.

¹⁸ Ib. xvii. 12, 13.

¹⁹ Ib. cxix. 69.

²⁰ Ib. 78.

²¹ Jer. xii. 16.

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16 ¶ Then they that
feared the LORD spake
often one to another: and
the LORD hearkened, and
heard it, and a book of
remembrance was written

* Ps. 66. 16.
ch. 4. 2.
† Heb. 3. 13.
* Ps. 56. 8.
Isa. 65. 6.
Rev. 20. 12.

will diligently learn the ways of My people, they shall be built up in the midst of My people; these say, the workers of wickedness had been built up: God had bidden themselves, 'make trial of Me in this; these answer, the wicked had made trial of Him, and had been unpunished.

16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often among themselves.* The proud-speaking of the ungodly called out the piety of the God-fearing. "The more the ungodly spake against God, the more these spake among themselves for God." Both went on till the great Day of severance. True, as those said, the distinction between righteous and wicked was not made yet, but it was stored up out of sight. They spake among themselves, strengthening each other against the ungodly sayings of the ungodly.

And the Lord hearkened and heard it. God, Whom these thought an idle looker-on, or regardless, all the while (to speak after the manner of men) was bending the ear³ from heaven and heard. Not one pious loyal word for Him and His glory, escaped Him.

And a book of remembrance was written before Him. Kings had their chronicles written⁴, wherein men's good or ill deeds toward them were recorded. But the image is one of the oldest in Scripture, and in the self-same words, *the Lord said to Moses, Write this, a memorial in a book.* (God can only speak to us in our own language. One expression is not more human than another, since all are so. Since with God all things are present, and memory relates to the past, to speak of God as "remembering" is as imperfect an expression in regard to God, as to speak of "a book." "Forgetfulness hath no place with God, because He is in no way changed; nor remembrance, because He forgetteth not." Both expressions are used, only to picture vividly to our minds, that our deeds are present with God, for good or

before him for them that
feared the LORD, and that
thought upon his name.

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17 And they shall be
mine, saith the LORD of
hosts, in that day when I

Ex. 19. 5.
Deut. 7. 6.
Ps. 135. 4.
Tit. 2. 14.
1 Pet. 2. 9.

for evil; and in the Day of Judgment He will make them manifest to men and angels, as though read out of a book, and will requite them. So Daniel had said, *'the judgment was set, and the books were opened.* And S. John says, *'The books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* So Moses says to God, *'If not, blot me out of Thy book which Thou hast written; and David, prophesying, prays, 'Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written among the righteous; and our Lord bids His disciples, 'Rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven.*

And that thought upon His name, rather, esteemed, prized, it, in contrast with those who ¹²despised; as, of Christ, when He should come, it is said, ¹³He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. "The thinking on His Name imports, not a bare thinking of, but a due esteem and awful regard of, so as with all care to avoid all things which may tend to the dishonor of it, as always in His presence and with respect to Him and fear of Him." ¹⁵Those are meant who always meditate on the ways of the Lord and the knowledge of His Godhead; for His name is Himself, and He is His Name; "the wise in heart who know the mystery of the awful glorious Name."

17. *And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels¹⁷, or perhaps better, And they shall be to Me, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day which I make (or, in which I do this) a peculiar treasure¹⁸.* ¹⁹In the day of judgment, those who fear Me and believe and maintain My providence shall be to Me a peculiar treasure, i.e. a people peculiarly belonging and precious to Me, blessed in the vision and fruition of Me. For as in the old law, Israel was a peculiar treasure²⁰, a special people²¹ and inher-

¹ ch. iii. 10.

² A Castro.

ויקשב

³ ספר הזכרונות Esth. vi. 1.

⁴ כתב זאת זכרון בספר Ex. xvii. 14.

⁵ S. Aug. in Ps. xxxvii. n. 5.

⁷ Dan. vii. 10.

⁶ Rev. xx. 12.

⁸ Ex. xxxii. 32.

¹⁰ Ps. lxi. 28.

¹¹ S. Luke x. 20.

¹² Mal. i. 6.

¹³ Is. liii. 3.

¹⁴ Proc.

¹⁵ Kim. ib.

¹⁶ Ibn Ezra. ib.

¹⁷ The grounds for this rendering are 1) the recurrence of the words, ויום אשר אני עשה, ver. 21.

Heb. [iv. 3. Eng.], and the כנלה לי Ex. xix. 5; so that we have both phrases elsewhere. In Deut. vii. 6, there is the equivalent להיות לי לעם כנלה

כנלה, and the like, Deut. xiv. 2, Ps. cxxxv. 4.

¹⁸ Beside the places in which Israel is spoken of such, it occurs only of David's treasures, laid up for building the temple 1 Chr. xxix. 3. and of the public treasures of kings and provinces. Eccl. ii. 8.

¹⁹ Lap. כנלה Ex. xlix. 5, Ps. cxxxv. 4.

²¹ עמ כנלה Deut. vii. 6.

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Or, special
treasure.
Isai. 62. 3.
Ps. 103. 13.
Ps. 58. 11.

make up my ||¹ jewels;
and ^{*}I will spare them, as
a man spareth his own son
that serveth him.

18 ¹Then shall ye re-
turn, and discern between
the righteous and the
wicked, between him that
serveth God and him that
serveth him not.

itance of God, chosen out of all nations, so in the new law Christians, and those who are righteous through grace, are the special treasure of God, and in heaven shall be His special treasure in glory, possessed by God and possessing God.¹ The *peculiar treasure*, is something, much prized, made great store of, and guarded. Such are Christians, bought at a great price, even by the precious Blood of Christ; but much more evidently such shall they be, Malachi says, in all eternity, which that Day of final retribution shall decide, "joying in the participation of their Creator, by Whose eternity they are fixed, by Whose truth they are assured, by Whose gift they are holy."

And I will spare them. It is a remarkable word, as used of those who should be to Him a *peculiar treasure*, teaching that, not of their own merits, they shall be such, but by His great mercy. It stands in contrast with the doom of the wicked, whom that day shall sentence to everlasting loss of God. Still, the saved also shall have needed the *tender mercy*² of God, whereby He pardoned their misdeeds and had compassion upon them.³ *If Thou, Lord, shalt lay up iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* Among those whom God will spare on that day, will be countless, whom the self-righteous despised as sinners. "I will spare them, although formerly sinners; I will spare them, repenting, and serving Me with the service of a pious confession, as a man spareth his own son which served him." For our Lord saith of the son, who refused to go work in his Father's vineyard, and afterward repented and went, that he ⁵*did the will of his Father.*

18. Then shall ye return, or turn, not, "return" in the sense of returning to God, for in that day will be the time of judgment, not of repentance; nor yet, "then shall ye again see;" for this is what they denied; and, if they had ceased to deny it, they would have been converted, not in that day, but before,

¹ S. Aug. in Civ. Dei x. 7.

² חסד, has originally the meaning of tender compassion.

CHAPTER IV.

Before
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1 *God's judgment on the wicked,
2 and his blessing on the good.
He exhorteth to the study of
the law, 5 and telleth of Eli-
jah's coming and office.*

FOR, behold, ^{*}the day ^{Joel 2. 31.}
cometh, that shall burn ^{ch. 3. 2.}
as an oven; and all ^{2 Pet. 3. 7.} the ^{ch. 3. 13.}
proud, yea, and all that do

when God gave them grace to see it. They shall turn, so as to have other convictions than before; but, as Judas. The Day of judgment will make a great change in earthly judgment. Last shall be first, and first last; this world's sorrow shall end in joy, and worldly joy in sorrow; afflictions shall be seen to be God's love: ⁶*Thou in very faithfulness hast afflicted me;* and the unclouded prosperity of the ungodly to be God's abandonment of them. The picture of the surprise of the wicked in the Day of judgment, in the Wisdom of Solomon, is a comment on the Prophet. "Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labors; when they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed with the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all they looked for: and they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach: we fools counted his life madness and his end to be without honor: how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!"

IV. 1. *For, behold, the day cometh, which shall burn as an oven.* He had declared the great severance of the God-fearing and the God-blaspheming, those who served and those who did not serve God; the righteous and the wicked; now he declares the way and time of the severance, the Day of Judgment. Daniel had described the fire of that day, ⁸*The throne [of the Ancient of days] was a fiery flame; his wheels a burning fire: a fiery stream issued and came forth from Him: the judgment was set and the books were opened.* Fire is ever spoken of, as accompanying the judgment. ⁹*Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence, a fire shall devour before Him;* ¹⁰*Behold the Lord will come with fire: for by fire and by the sword will the Lord plead with all*

⁵ Ps. cxxx. 3.

⁶ Rup.

⁸ S. Matt. xxi. 31.

⁹ Ps. cxix. 75.

¹⁰ Wisd. v. 1-5.

¹¹ Dan. vii. 9, 10.

¹² Ps. l. 3.

¹³ Is. lxvi. 10, 10.

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wickedly, shall be stubble :
and the day that cometh
shall burn them up, saith
the LORD of hosts, that it

• Obad. 18.

shall leave them neither
root nor branch.

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2 ¶ But unto you that
fear my name shall the

Amos 2. 9.
ch. 3. 16.

flesh : 1 every man's work shall be made manifest, for the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire : and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. S. Peter tells us that fire will be of this burning world ; 2 the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men ; — in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

The oven, or furnace, pictures the intensity of the heat, which is white from its intensity, and darts forth, fiercely, shooting up like a living creature, and destroying life, as the flame of the fire of Nebuchadnezzar's 3 burning fiery furnace slew those men that took up Shadrach Meshach and Abednego. The whole world shall be one burning furnace.

And all the proud and all that do wickedly. All those, whom those murmurers pronounced blessed 4, yea and all who should thereafter be like them (he insists on the universality of the judgment), every doer of wickedness, up to that day and those who should then be, shall be stubble. "5 The proud and mighty, who in this life were strong as iron and brass, so that no one dared resist them, but they dared to fight with God, these, in the Day of Judgment, shall be most powerless, as stubble cannot resist the fire, in an everliving death."

That shall leave them neither root nor branch "i. e. 6 they shall have no hope of shooting up again to life; that life, I mean, which is worthy of love, and in glory with God, in holiness and bliss. For when the root has not been wholly cut away, nor the shoot torn up as from the depth, some hope is retained, that it may again shoot up. For, as it is written, 7 There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. But if it be wholly torn up from below and from its very roots, and its shoots be fiercely cut away, all hope, that it can again shoot up to life, will perish also. So, he saith, will all hope of the lovers of sin perish. For so the Divine Isaiah clearly announces, 8 their worm shall not die and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh."

2. But (And) unto you, who fear My Name,

shall the Sun of Righteousness arise. It is said of God, 9 The Lord God is a sun and a shield, and, 10 The Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; thy sun shall no more go down; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light; and Zacharias, speaking of the office of S. John Baptist in the words of Malachi, thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His way, speaks of 11 the tender mercy of our God, whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness. "12 He Who is often called Lord and God, and Angel and Captain of the Lord's host, and Christ and Priest and Word and Wisdom of God and Image, is now called the Sun of Righteousness. He, the Father promises, will arise, not to all, but to those only who fear His Name, giving them the light of the Sun of Righteousness, as the reward of their fear toward Him. This is God the Word Who saith, I am the Light of the world, Who was the Light of every one who cometh into the world." Primarily, Malachi speaks of our Lord's second Coming, when 13 to them that look for Him shall He appear, a second time unto salvation. For as, in so many places 14, the Old Testament exhibits the opposite lots of the righteous and the wicked, so here the prophet speaks of the Day of Judgment, in reference to the two opposite classes, of which he had before spoken, the proud and evil doers, and the fearers of God. The title, the Sun of Righteousness, belongs to both Comings; "5 in the first, He diffused rays of righteousness, whereby He justified and daily justifies any sinners whatever, who will look to Him, i. e. believe in Him and obey Him, as the sun imparts light, joy and life to all who turn toward it." In the second, the righteousness which He gave, He will own and exhibit, cleared from all the misjudgment of the world, before men and Angels. Yet more, healing is, throughout Holy Scripture, used of the removal of sickness or curing of wounds, in the individual or state or Church, and, as to the individual, bodily or spiritual. So David thanks God, first for the forgiveness, 15 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; then for healing of his soul, Who healeth all thy diseases; then for salvation, Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; then for the crown laid up for him, Who crowneth thee with

11 Cor. iiii. 13. 12 S. Pet. iiii. 7-10. 13 Dan. iiii. 22.

4 eh. iiii. 15. 5 Lap. 6 S. Cyr. 7 Job xiv. 7.

8 Is. lxxvi. ult. 9 Ps. lxxxiv. 11. 10 Is. ix. 10, 20.

11 S. Luke i. 76, 78, 79. 12 Eus. Dem. Ev. iv. 29.

13 Heb. ix. 28. 14 As. Ps. i. 6, ii. 12, iii. 7, 8, v. 10-12, vi. 8-10, vii. 16,

17, ix. 17-20, x. 16-18, xi. 6, 7, xvii. 13-15, xx. 8, xxvi. 9-12, xxxi. 23, xxxii. 10, 11, xxxiv. 21, 22, xxxv. 20-28, xxxvi. 10-12, xxxvii. 38-40, xl. 15-17, i. 22, 23, lii. 5-9, lv. 22, 23, lviii. 10, 11, lxi. 10, 11, lxiv. 9, 10, lxviii. 27, 28, clv. 38-39, cxli. 9, 10, cxxvi. 5, cxlix. 9.

15 Ps. ciii. 3-5.

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'Sun of righteousness
arise with healing in his
wings; and ye shall go
forth, and grow up as
calves of the stall.

¹ Luke 1. 78.
Eph. 5. 14.
² Pet. 1. 19.
Rev. 2. 28.
³ 2 Sam. 22. 43.
Mic. 7. 10.
Zech. 10. 5.

3 * And ye shall tread

loving-kindness and tender mercies; then, with the abiding sustenance and satisfying joy, *Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things.* Healing then primarily belongs to this life, in which we are still encompassed with infirmities, and even His elect and His Saints have still, whereof to be healed. The full then and complete healing of the soul, the integrity of all its powers will be in the life to come. There, will be "understanding without error, memory without forgetfulness, thought without distraction, love without simulation, sensation without offence, satisfying without satiety, universal health without sickness." "For through Adam's sin the soul was wounded in understanding, through obscurity and ignorance; in will, through the leaning to perishing goods; as concupiscent, through infirmity and manifold concupiscence. In heaven Christ will heal all these, giving to the understanding light and knowledge; to the will, constancy in good; to the desire, that it should desire nothing but what is right and good. Then too the healing of the soul will be the light of glory, the vision and fruition of God, and the glorious endowments consequent thereon, oversteaming all the powers of the soul and therefrom to the body." "God has made the soul of a nature so mighty, that from its most full latitude, which at the end of time is promised to the saints, there shall overflow to the inferior nature, the body, not bliss, which belongs to the soul as intelligent and capable of fruition, but the fullness of health that is, the vigorousness of incorruption."

And ye shall go forth, as from a prison-house, from the miseries of this lifeless life, and grow up, or perhaps more probably, bound¹, as the animal, which has been confined, exults in its regained freedom, itself full of life and exuberance of delight. So the Psalmist, *The saints shall exult in glory.* And our Lord uses the like word², as to the way, with which they should greet persecution to the utmost, for His Name's sake. Swiftmess of

¹ Pomerius de vit. contempl. l. 4.

² Iap.

³ S. Aug. Ep. 118 ad Dione. n. 14 Opp. ii. 331. L.

⁴ So LXX. Vulg. Syr. (and on Jer. l. 11) Jon. (here "go" only); of modern Jews, Tanchum here and on Jer. l. 11. Pococke says more cautiously than moderns generally, "not far from this signification is the Arab. *ʔarʔ*, which signifies to 'vaunt' or 'boast' or 'go strutting' or 'proudly.'" For "arro-

down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.

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4 ¶ Remember ye the

motion is one of the endowments of the spiritual body, after the resurrection; as the angels, to whom the righteous shall be like¹, *run and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.*

3. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet. It shall be a great reversal. He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Here the wicked often have the pre-eminence. This was the complaint of the murmurers among the Jews; in the morning of the Resurrection *the upright shall have dominion over them.* The wicked, he had said, shall be as stubble, and that day *shall burn them up*; here, then, they are as the ashes, the only remnant of the stubble, as the dust under the feet. "The elect shall rejoice, that they have, in mercy, escaped such misery. Therefore they shall be kindled inconceivably with the Divine love, and shall from their inmost heart give thanks unto God." And being thus of one mind with God, and seeing all things as He seeth, they will rejoice in His judgments, because they are His. For they cannot have one slightest velleity, other than the all-perfect Will of God. So Isaiah closes his prophecy, *And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men, that have transgressed against Me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh.* So *The righteous shall rejoice, when he seeth the vengeance;* and another Psalmist, *The righteous shall see and rejoice; and all wickedness shall stop her mouth; and Job, The righteous see and are glad, and the innocent laugh them to scorn.*

4. Remember ye the law of Moses, My servant. *The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.* They then who were most faithful to the law, would be most prepared for Christ. But for those of his own day, too, who were negligent both of the ceremonial and moral law, he says, "Since the judgment of God will be so fearful, remem-

gance," not "exuberance of joy," seems the meaning of the Arabic word. The E. V., "grow," "enlarge," follows the interpretation given by most Heb. Comm. or lexicographers.

¹ Ps. cxlix. 5.

² Septuag. S. Luke vi. 21.

³ S. Luke xx. 36.

⁴ Ezek. i. 14.

⁵ iv. 1.

⁶ Dion.

⁷ Ps. lxxiii. 10.

⁸ Job xxii. 19.

⁹ Ps. xlix. 14.

¹⁰ Is. lxxvi. 24.

¹¹ Is. cviii. 42.

¹² Gal. iii. 24.

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^b law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him ¹ in Horeb for all Israel, with ² the statutes and judgments.

^b Ex. 20. 3. &c.
¹ Deut. 4. 10.
² Ps. 147. 10.

ber now unceasingly and observe the law of God given by Moses."

Which I commanded¹ unto him for [lit. upon, incumbent upon] all Israel. Not Moses commanded them, but God by His servant Moses; therefore He "² would in the day of judgment take strict account of each, whether they had or had not kept them. He would glorify those who obeyed, He would condemn those who disobeyed them." They had asked, *Where is the God of judgment? What profit, that we have kept the ordinance? He tells them of the judgment to come, and bids them take heed, that they did indeed keep them; for there was a day of account to be held for all.*

With the statutes and judgments, better, statutes and judgments, i. e. consisting in them; it seems added as an explanation of the word, law, individualizing them. Duty is fulfilled, not in a general acknowledgment of law, or an arbitrary selection of some favorite commandments, which cost the human will less; as, in our Lord's time, they minutely observed the law of tithes, but ³ omitted weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. It is in obedience to the commandments, one by one, one and all. Moses exhorted to the keeping of the law, under these same words: *"Now, therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and judgments which I teach you, to do them, that ye may live.—Ye shall not add unto the word that I command you, neither shall ye diminish it.—Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me.—What nation so great, that hath statutes and judgments, righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? The Lord commanded me at that time, to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land, whither ye go to possess it.*

5. Behold I will send [I send, as a future, proximate in the prophet's mind] you *Elijah the prophet.* The Archangel Gabriel interprets this for us, to include the sending of S. John Baptist. For he not only says ⁴ that he shall go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, but describes his mission in the characteristic words of Malachi, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children: and

5 ¶ Behold, I will send Before
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you *Elijah the prophet*
^a before the coming of the ¹ Matt. 11. 14.
great and dreadful day of ² Mark 9. 11.
the LORD: ³ Luke 1. 17.
⁴ Joel 2. 31.

those other words also, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, perhaps represent the sequel in Malachi, and the hearts of the children to the fathers; for their hearts could only be so turned by conversion to God, Whom the fathers, patriarchs and prophets, knew, loved and served; and Whom they served in name only. S. John Baptist, in denying that he was Elias⁵, denied only, that he was that great prophet himself. Our Lord, in saying, *"This is Elias, which was for to come,"* that Elias is come already and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed, met the error of the Scribes, that He could not be the Christ, because Elias was not yet come⁶. When He says, *"Elias truly shall first come and restore all things,"* He implies a coming of Elias, other than that of S. John Baptist, since he was already martyred, and all things were not yet restored. This must also be the fullest fulfilment. For the great and terrible Day of the Lord is the Day of judgment, of which all earthly judgments, however desolating, (as the destruction of Jerusalem) are but shadows and earnest. Before our Lord's coming all things looked on to His first Coming, and, since that Coming, all looks on to the Second, which is the completion of the first and of all things in time.

Our Lord's words, *Elias truly shall first come and restore all things*, seem to me to leave no question, that, as S. John Baptist came, in the spirit and power of Elias, before His First Coming, so, before the Second Coming, Elias should come in person, as Jews and Christians have alike expected. This has been the Christian expectation from the first. S. Justin Martyr asked his opponent⁷, "Shall we not conceive that the Word of God has proclaimed Elias to be the forerunner of the great and terrible day of His second Coming?" "Certainly," was Trypho's reply. S. Justin continues, "Our Lord Himself taught us in His own teaching that this very thing shall be, when He said that *Elias also shall come*; and we know that this shall be fulfilled, when He is about to come from Heaven in glory." Tertullian says⁸, "Elias is to come again, not after a departure from life, but after a translation; not to be re-

Elijah should come before the great and terrible Day of the Lord, but in their denial that He should have any forerunner of His Coming in His great humility. They erred, not in what they believed, but in what they disbelieved.

¹⁰ S. Matt. xvii. 11. ¹¹ Dial. c. 49. p. 131. Oxf. Tr.

¹² De anima c. 35. v. 639. Rig.

¹ צוה with double accus.

² Lap.

³ S. Matt. xxiii. 23.

⁴ Deut. iv. 1, 2, 5, 8, 14.

⁵ S. Luke i. 17.

⁶ S. John i. 21.

⁷ S. Matt. xi. 14.

⁸ Ib. xvii. 12.

⁹ The error of the Jews consisted, not in their rooted belief, as founded on these words, that

stored to the body, from which he was never taken; but to be restored to the world, from which he was translated; not by way of restoration to life, but for the completion of prophecy; one and the same in name and in person." "1 Enoch and Elias were translated, and their death is not recorded, as being deferred; but they are reserved as to die, that they may vanquish Antichrist by their blood." And, in proof that the end was not yet, "2 No one has yet received Elias; no one has yet fled from Antichrist." And the ancient author of the verses against Marcion; "3 Elias who has not yet tasted the debt of death, because he is again to come into the world." Origen says simply in one place⁴, that the Saviour answered the question as to the objection of the Scribes, "not annulling what had been handed down concerning Elias, but affirming that there was another coming of Elias before Christ, unknown to the scribes, according to which, not knowing him, and, being in a manner, accomplices in his being cast into prison by Herod and slain by him, they had done to him what they listed." S. Hippolytus has; "5 As two Comings of our Lord and Saviour were indicated by the Scriptures, the first in the flesh, in dishonor, that He might be set at naught—the second in glory, when He shall come from Heaven with the heavenly host and the glory of the Father—so two forerunners were pointed out, the first, John, the son of Zacharias, and again—since He is manifested as Judge at the end of the world, His forerunners must first appear, as He says through Malachi, *I will send to you Elias the Tishbite before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come.*"

S. Hilary; "6 The Apostles enquire in anxiety about the times of Elias. To whom He answereth, that *Elias will come and restore all things*, that is, will recall to the knowledge of God, what he shall find of Israel; but he signifies that John came in the spirit and power of Elias, to whom they had shewn all severe and harsh dealings, that, foreannouncing the Coming of the Lord, he might be a forerunner of the Passion also by an example of wrong and harass." "7 We understand that those same prophets [Moses and Elias] will come before His Coming, who, the Apocalypse of John says, will be slain by Antichrist, although there are various opinions of very many, as to Enoch or Jeremiah, that one of them is to die, as Elias."

Hilary the Deacon, A.D. 355, has on the words,

I suppose God hath set forth us the Apostles last; "8 He therefore applies these to his own person, because he was always in distress, suffering, beyond the rest, persecutions and distresses, as Enoch and Elias will suffer, who will be Apostles at the last time. For they have to be sent before Christ, to make ready the people of God, and fortify all the Churches to resist Antichrist, of whom the Apocalypse attests, that they will suffer persecutions and be slain." "9 When the faithless shall be secure of the kingdom of the devil, the saints, i. e. Enoch and Elias being slain, rejoicing in the victory, and sending gifts, one to another, as the Apocalypse says¹⁰, sudden destruction shall come upon them. For Christ at His Coming, shall destroy them all." S. Gregory of Nyssa quotes the prophecy under the heading, that "11 before the second Coming of our Lord, Elias should come."

S. Ambrose; "12 Because the Lord was to come down from heaven, and to ascend to heaven, He raised Elias to heaven, to bring him back to the earth at the time He should please." "13 The beast, Antichrist, ascends from the abyss to fight against Elias and Enoch and John, who are restored to the earth for the testimony to the Lord Jesus, as we read in the Apocalypse of John."

S. Jerome gives here the mystical meaning; "God will send, in Elias, (which is interpreted 'My God' and who is of the town Thibse, which signifies 'conversion' or 'penitence') the whole choir of the Prophets, to convert the heart of the fathers to the sons, viz. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the patriarchs, that their posterity may believe in the Lord the Saviour, in whom themselves believed: for Abraham saw the day of the Lord and was glad." Here, he speaks of the "coming of Elias before their anointed," as a supposition of Jews and Judaizing heretics. But in commenting on our Lord's words in S. Matthew, he adheres twice to the literal meaning. "14 Some think that John is therefore called Elias, because, as, according to Malachi, at the second Coming of the Saviour¹⁵, Elias will precede and announce the Judge to come, so did John at His first Coming, and each is a messenger, of the first or second Coming of the Lord:" and again concisely, "15 He who is to come in the second Coming of the Saviour in the actual body, now comes through John in spirit and power;" and he speaks of Enoch and Elias as "16 the two witnesses in the Revelation,

¹ Id. ib. c. 50, p. 549.

² de res. carnalis c. 22. p. 385. Rig.

³ Carm. incert. Auct. adv. Marcion. L. iii. p. 302. col. 1 Rig.

⁴ in S. Matt. xvii. 10. Opp. iii. 567.

⁵ de Antichristo c. 44-46 pp. 21, 22.

⁶ in Matt. c. xvii. n. 4. Opp. p. 694, 695.

⁷ Id. ib. c. xx. n. 10. p. 716. Ben.

⁸ App. S. Ambros. ii. 125. in 1 Cor. iv. 9.

⁹ Ib. p. 282. in 1 Thess. v. 1.

¹⁰ Rev. xi. 10.

¹¹ adv. Jud. Opp. ii. p. 266.

¹² de penit. i. 8.

¹³ in Psalm 45, n. 10. Opp. i. 930. "Only one MS. has, 'and John.'" Ben. note.

¹⁴ On S. Matt. xi. 14, 15.

¹⁵ On S. Matt. xvii. 11, 12.

¹⁶ Ep 59 [al. 148] ad Marcell. Opp. i. 326. Vall.

since, according to the Apocalypse of John, Enoch and Elias are spoken of, as having to die."

S. Chrysostom, "1 When He saith that Elias cometh and shall restore all things, He means Elias himself, and the conversion of the Jews, which shall then be; but when He saith, *which was to come*, He calls John, Elias, according to the manner of his ministry."

In S. Augustine's time it was the universal belief. "2 When he [Malachi] had admonished them to remember the law of Moses, because he foresaw, that they would for a long time not receive it spiritually, as it ought, he added forthwith; *And I will send you Elias the Tishbite &c.* That when, through this Elias, the great and wonderful prophet, at the last time before the judgment, the law shall have been expounded to them, the Jews shall believe in the true Christ, i. e. in our Christ, is everywhere in the mouths and hearts of the faithful. For not without reason is it hoped, that he shall come before the Coming of the Saviour, as Judge, because not without reason is it believed that he still lives. For he was carried in a chariot of fire from things below; which Scripture most evidently attests. When he shall come then, by expounding the law spiritually, which the Jews now understand carnally, he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children."

S. Cyril of Alexandria, his antagonist Theodore, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was loose from all tradition, had the same clear belief. S. Cyril; "It is demonstrative of the gentleness and long-suffering of God, that Elias also the Tishbite shall shine upon us, to foreannounce when the Judge shall come to those in the whole world. For the Son shall come down, as Judge, in the glory of the Father, attended by the angels, and shall sit on the throne of His glory, judging the world in righteousness, and shall reward every man according to his works. But since we are in many sins, well is it for us, that the Divine Prophet goes before Him, bringing all those on earth to one mind; that all, being brought to the unity through the faith, and ceasing from evil intents, may fulfill that which is good, and so be saved when the Judge cometh down. The blessed Baptist John came before Him in the spirit and power of Elias. But, as he preached saying, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight*, so also the divine Elias proclaims His then being near and all-but-present, that He may judge the world in righteousness." Theodore; "3 Malachi teaches us how, when Antichrist shall presume on these things, the great Elias shall appear, preaching to the Jews the Coming of Christ: and he shall convert many, for this is the meaning of, he

shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, i. e. the Jews (for these he calls fathers, as being older in knowledge) to those who believed from the Gentiles. They who shall believe through the preaching of the great Elias, and shall join themselves to the Gentiles who seized the salvation sent to them, shall become one Church. He hints, how when these things are done by Antichrist, S. Michael the Archangel will set all in motion, that Elias should come and foreannounce the Coming of the Lord, that the then Jews may obtain salvation." And on this place, "Knowing well, that they would neither obey the law, nor receive Him when He came, but would deliver Him to be crucified, He promises them, in His unspeakable love for man, that He will again send Elias as a herald of salvation, *Lo, I will send you Elias the Tishbite.* And signifying the time, He added, *Before the great and terrible Day of the Lord shall come*: He named the Day of His Second Coming. But He teaches us, what the great Elias shall do, when he comes, *Who shall bring back the heart of the father to the son &c.* And pointing out the end, for which Elias should first come, *Lest I come and smite the earth utterly.* For lest, finding you all in unbelief, I send you all to that endless punishment, Elias will first come, and will persuade you, O Jews, to unite you indissolubly with those, who from the Gentiles believe in Me, and to be united to My one Church."

Theodore of Mopsuestia paraphrases: "In addition to all which I have said, I give you this last commandment, to remember My law, which I gave to all Israel through Moses, plainly declaring what they ought to do in each thing, and as the first token of obedience, to receive the Lord Christ when He cometh, appearing for the salvation of all men: Who will end the law, but shew His own perfection. It had been well, had you immediately believed Him when He came, and known Him, as He Whom Moses and all the prophets signified, Who should put an end to the law, and reveal the common salvation of all men, so that it should be manifest to all, that this is the sum and chief good of the whole dispensation of the law, to bring all men to the Lord Christ, Who, for those great goods, should be manifested in His own time. But since, when He manifested Himself, ye manifested your own ungainliness, the blessed Elias shall be sent to you before the second Coming of Christ, when He will come from Heaven, to unite those who, for religion, are separated from each other, and, through the knowledge of religion, to bring the fathers to one-mindedness with the children, and in a word, to bring all men to one and the same harmony, when those, then

1 In S. Matt. Hom. 57. Opp. vii. 577. 2 de Civ. Dei,

xx. 29. Opp. vii. 613.

3 On Daniel, c. xii. finit.

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6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of

the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

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a Zech. 14. 12.
b Zech. 5. 3.

found in ungodliness, shall receive from him the knowledge of the truth in the communion with the godly thence ensuing."

The African author of the work on the promises and predictions of God. (between A. D. 450-455.)

"¹ Against Antichrist shall be sent two witnesses, the prophets Enoch and Elijah, against whom shall arise three false prophets of Antichrist."

Isidore of Seville A. D. 595.

"² Elias, borne in a chariot of fire, ascended to heaven, to come according to the prophet Malachi at the end of the world, and to precede Christ, to announce His last Coming, with great deeds and wondrous signs, so that, on earth too, Antichrist will war against him, be against him, or him who is to come with him, and will slay them; their bodies also will lie unburied in the streets. Then, raised by the Lord, they will smite the kingdom of Antichrist with a great blow. After this, the Lord will come, and will slay Antichrist with the word of His mouth, and those who worshiped him."

"³ This will be in the last times, when, on the preaching of Elias, Judah will be converted to Christ."

To add one more, for his great gifts, S. Gregory the Great. "⁴ It is promised, that when Elias shall come, he shall bring back the hearts of the sons to their fathers, that the doctrine of the old, which is now taken from the hearts of the Jews, may, in the mercy of God, return, when the sons shall begin to understand of the Lord God, what the fathers taught." "⁵ Although Elias is related to have been carried to heaven, he deferred, he did not escape, death. For it is said of him by the mouth of the Truth Himself, *Elias shall come and restore all things*. He shall come to restore all things; for to this end is he restored to this world, that he may both fulfill the office of preaching, and pay the debt of the flesh." "⁶ The holy Church, although it now loses many through the shock of temptation, yet, at the end of the world, it receives its own double, when, having received the Gentiles to the full, all Judaea too, which shall then be, agrees to

hasten to its faith. For hence it is written, *Until the fullness of the Gentiles shall come, and so all Israel shall be saved*. Hence in the Gospel the Truth says, *Elias shall come and shall restore all things*. For now the Church has lost the Israelites, whom it could not convert by preaching; but then, at the preaching of Elias, while it collects all which it shall find, it receives in a manner more fully what it has lost." "⁷ John is spoken of as to come in the spirit and power of Elias, because, as Elias shall precede the second Coming of the Lord, so John preceded His first. For as Elias will come, as precursor of the Judge, so John was made the precursor of the Redeemer. John then was Elias in spirit; he was not Elias in person. What then the Lord owned as to spirit, that John denies as to the person."

Whether Elias is one of the two witnesses⁸, spoken of in the Apocalypse, is obviously a distinct question. Of commentators on the Apocalypse, Arethas⁹ remarks that as to Elias, there is clear testimony from Holy Scripture, this of Malachi; but that, with regard to Enoch, we have only the fact of his being freed from death by translation, and the tradition of the Church. S. John Damascene fixed the belief, in the Eastern Church¹⁰. In the West, Bede e.g. who speaks of the belief that the two witnesses were Elijah and Enoch, as what was said by "¹¹ some doctors," takes our Lord's declaration, that Elias shall return, in its simple meaning¹². Yet it was no matter of faith¹³. When the belief as to a personal Antichrist was changed by Luther and Calvin, the belief of a personal forerunner of Christ gave way also.

6. And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children. Now they were unlike, and severed by that unlikeness from each other. Yet not on earth; for on earth parents and children were alike alienated from God, and united between themselves in wickedness or worldliness. The common love of the world or of worldly pursuits, or gain or self-exaltation, or making a fortune or securing it, is, so far, a common bond of interest to those of one family, through a common selfishness,

¹ In Evang. Hom. vii. n. 1.

² See vol. i. p. 45.

³ Comm. on Apocalypse printed with Cæcumenius p. 942. ed. 1530.

⁴ De fide iv. 26.

⁵ on Rev. c. xli.

⁶ on S. Matt. xvii. 11. S. Mark ix.

⁷ Rupertus says here, "Of the coming of Elias I dare not define anything, because some doctors, with whom almost all agree, believe that he will come in the letter, and will restore all things, and will pay the debt of death; but others not, with whom the illustrious S. Jerome seems to agree."

⁸ Dimid. Temp. c. 13. App. to S. Prosper. Enoch and Elias are spoken of, as the two witnesses, by Ammonius in the Comm. varior. on Daniel. Mai Scriptt. Vett. Nov. Coll. t. i. p. 311. p. 52.

⁹ de ord. et ob. Patr. c. 35. Opp. v. 167, 168.

¹⁰ c. Jud. ii. 6. 9. Opp. vi. 70.

¹¹ Moral. xi. 15. n. 24. Ben.

¹² Ib. xx. 34. n. 66. Ben.

¹³ Ib. xxxv. 14. n. 24. See also on Ezek. L. i. Hom. 12. n. 8, 9, where he speaks of the coming of Enoch also.

though that selfishness is the parent of general discord, of fraud, violence, and other misdeeds. Nay, conversion of children or parents becomes rather a source of discord, embittering the unconverted. Whence our Lord says, *Think not, that I¹ am come to send peace on the earth. I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household*; a prophecy fulfilled continually in the early persecutions, even to the extent of those other words of our Lord, *the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death*. It is fulfilled also in the intense hatred of the Jews at this day, to any who are converted to Christ; a hatred which seems to have no parallel in the world. Nor do the words seem to mean that fathers and children should be united in one common conversion to God, as one says, *"All shall be one heart to return to the Lord, both fathers and children;"* for he speaks primarily of their mutual conversion to one another, not to God.

The form of the expression seems to imply that the effect of the preaching of Elias shall be, to bring back the children, the Jews then in being, to the faith and love which their

fathers, the Patriarchs, had; that "as these believed, hoped for, longed exceedingly for, and loved Christ to come, so their sons should believe, hope in, long exceedingly for and love Christ, Who was come, yea is present; and so the heart of fathers, which before was turned from their unbelieving children, he should turn to them, now believing, and cause the Patriarchs to own and love the Jews believing in Christ, as indeed their children; for *your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was glad, Christ saith.*"

Let I come and smite the earth with a curse, i. e. with an utter destruction, from which there should be no redemption. In the end, God will so smite the earth, and all, not converted to Him. The prayer and zeal of Elijah will gain a reprieve, in which God will spare the world for the gathering of His own elect, the full conversion of the Jews, which shall fulfill the Apostle's words, *"So shall all Israel be saved."*

After the glad tidings, Malachi, and the Old Testament in him, ends with words of awe, telling us of the consequence of the final hardening of the heart; the eternal severance, when the unending end of the everlasting Gospel itself shall be accomplished, and its last grain shall be gathered into the garner of the Lord. The Jews, who would be wiser than the prophet, repeat the previous verse², because Malachi closes so aw-

¹ S. Matt. x. 34-36.

² Ib. 21.

³ Ibn Ezra. The Jews, although mostly agreed, that Elijah will come, are disagreed as to the end of his coming. By some he is spoken of as a Redeemer. *Tanchuma*, (f. 31. 1.) "God said to Israel, In this world I sent an angel to cast out the nations before you, but in the future [or, in the world to come, *Yalkut Shim'oni* f. 98-99] myself will lead you and will send you Elijah the prophet." *Pesikta rabbathi* (in *Yalkut Shim'oni* li. f. 32. 4.) "Both redeemed Israel: Moses in Egypt, and Elias in that which is to come." (Id. ib. f. 53. 2.) "I send you a redeemer." *Midrash Shocher* (cf. f. 884, "Israel said, 'It is written of the first redemption, 'He sent Moses His servant, Aaron whom He had chosen; send me two like them.' God answered; 'I will send you Elijah the prophet: this is one, the other is he, of whom Isaiah spoke (xlii. 1.) Behold, my servant whom I have chosen.'") *"Shemoth Rabba"* [sect. 3. col. 108. 2. ad loc.] "In the second redemption, ye shall be healed and redeemed by the word I, i. e. I will send." Or, as a comforter, "I will send you Elias, he shall come and comfort you." *Debarim rabba* sect. 3. fin. Or to pronounce some things clean, others unclean. *Shir hashirim rabba* f. 27. 3. [all the above in *Schoettgen* ad loc.] Others, in different ways, to settle, to which tribe each belongs. *Kimchi* on Ezek. xlvii. and this with different explanations as to strictness. (See *Eduoth* fin. *Mishnah* T. iv. p. 362. *Surenhus*.) "Rabbi Simeon says, 'To remove controversies.' And the wise, and doctors say, 'To make peace in the world, as is said, 'Behold I send.'" R. Abraham B. David explains the peace to be "from the nations," and adds, "to announce to them the coming of the redeemer, and this in one day before the coming of the Messiah;" and to "turn the hearts &c." he explains "the hearts of the fathers and children (on whom softness had fallen from fear, and they fled, some here, some there, from their distresses) on

that day they shall return to their might and to one another and shall comfort each other." *Abarbanel* says, that Elijah shall be the instrument of the resurrection, and that, through those who rise, the race of man shall be directed in the recognition of God and the true faith." Ibn Ezra, "that he shall come at the collection of the captives, as Moses at the redemption of Egypt, not for the resurrection." [These are collected by *Frischmuth* de *Elijah* advntu. *Thes. Theol. Phil.* V. T. T. i. p. 1070. sqq.] R. *Tanchum*, from *Maimonides*, says, "This is without doubt a promise of the appearance of a prophet in Israel, a little before the coming of the Messiah; and some of the wise think that it is Elias the Tishbite himself, and this is found in most of the *Midrashoth*, and some think that it is a prophet like him in rank, occupying his place in the knowledge of God and the manifesting His Name and that so he is called Elijah. And so explained the great Gaon, Rab Mosheh ben Maimon, at the end of his great book on jurisprudence, called 'Mishneh Torah.' And, perhaps he [the person sent] may be Messiah ben Joseph, as he says again—And the exactness of the matter in these promises will only be known, when they appear: and no one has therein any accredited account, but each of them says what he says, according to what appears to him, and what preponderates in his mind of the explanation of the truth." "The turning of the heart of the father to the children," he explains to be, "the restoration of religion: until all should be of one heart in the obedience to God."

⁴ S. John viii. 56.

⁵ Rom. xi. 26.

⁶ The Masora at the end of Malachi notices, that in the reading of *פְּנִי*, i. e. *Isaiah*, the Twelve [as one book, ending with Malachi], the Lamentations *Ecclesiastes*, the last verse but one is repeated.

fully. The Maker of the heart of man knew better the hearts which He had made, and taught their authors to end the books of Isaiah and Ecclesiastes with words of awe, from which man's heart so struggles to escape. To turn to God here, or everlasting destruction from His presence there, is the only choice open to thee. "I Think of this, when lust goads thee, or ambition solicits thee, or anger convulses thee, or the flesh blandishes thee, or the world allures thee, or the devil displays his deceitful pomp and enticement. In thy hand and thy choice are life and death, heaven and hell, salvation

The three do end heavily; but Ecclesiastes only ends with the declaration of a day of judgment,

and damnation, bliss or misery everlasting. Choose which thou wilt. Think, 'A moment which delighteth, eternity which tortureth;' on the other hand, 'a moment which tortureth, eternity which delighteth.'"

"I see that all things come to an end:

Thy commandment is exceeding broad."

Ps. cxix. 96.

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after Thee, O God."

Ps. xlii. 1.

which, it must be supposed, they did not like to dwell upon.

¹ Lap.